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How To Get On

REV. BERNARD FEENEY



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HOW TO GET ON.

BY

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WITH PREFACE

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

It is universally admitted that energy and strength of purpose are eminently characteristic of the American people. It is highly important, therefore, to direct these admirable qualities into proper paths, and lead them to a noble end. But it is evident that there are many causes existing in our country which may tend to divert these noble qualities from their proper objects.

Protestantism has abandoned almost all dogma. The wildest confusion as to what man should believe everywhere exists. As a natural consequence, infidelity and most dangerous superstitions are on the increase among Americans. What a pernicious effect such a condition of religion—the foundation of all things—must have in directing an energetic and resolute people !

The Americans are a newspaper-reading people. Every one reads the morning journal, and

the influence of the press is very great. It is scarcely necessary to state that much of this newspaper literature has anything but a good influence in determining the energies of our active people. We could mention many other agencies at work among the people of this Republic that will prove of most serious injury; but let these suffice. We therefore gladly welcome any and every work that may serve to counteract the dangerous influences abroad, and help to turn to just and noble purposes the splendid energy and determination so natural to the American character.

We have not yet met any book which seems to us so fitted for the purpose as the admirable work that has been kindly submitted to our criticism by its Rev. Author. We, therefore, gladly welcome this work of Rev. B. Feeney, entitled "How to Get On." Its very title appeals strongly to that natural energy and strength of will so characteristic of the American people, and which, if properly directed, can achieve so much. Amid the Babel of voices which so often mislead our youth to prostituting its fresh energy to improper ways and unbecoming purposes, this book of Rev. B. Feeney speaks

the splendid words of truth. The author holds up to our people, and especially to our youth, the high goal which all can reach. He shows many of the dangers which beset the path to success in life; and he most candidly lays before the reader the means whereby life may be made a success. The Rev. Author has written this very useful work in a most pleasant and interesting manner. His principles are eminently correct, and his manner of treating his important subject highly attractive and entertaining. We should be greatly pleased to see this valuable work in every family of the land, as its perusal will be valuable to all.

✠ WM. H. GROSS,

Archbishop of Oregon

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HOW TO GET ON.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

“ ALLO! Jack, who is your seedy friend?”

Jack and I were walking down Broadway, one bleak winter evening, when a pinched-up, wretched-looking figure saluted him and called him aside, while I strolled on.

“Who is your seedy friend?” I asked, as he rejoined me.

“My seedy friend, as you call him,” was the reply, “is a gentleman by birth and education. He is a young man on whom hatfuls of money have been spent. But I’ll tell you his history after dinner. A story like his is relished best when you have dined comfortably and are seated with your family and friends round a bright,

cheerful fire. A winter night, too, is the fittest time to tell it; for then it helps, with the storm rumbling in the chimney and the rain beating against the windows, to make one thank God that he is not one of the homeless outcasts of our streets."

Jack, I may say here, is a physician who has attained some eminence in his profession, although not yet quite thirty years of age. He is a very old and dear college companion of mine; and when we meet we never think of calling each other by any except our familiar school-boy names.

"My seedy friend," he began after dinner, when we had both made ourselves quite cosey in his study, with all the accessories of a social evening placed on a table between us—"My seedy friend is the son of a wealthy newspaper man in this city. His father intended him from his cradle for a literary career, and spared no expense on his education. The best masters, the most modern methods, the handsomest picture-books, the costliest kindergarten apparatus, and all the rest, were around the young lad while yet toddling about the nursery. 'Develop the intellect, expand it, cultivate it, plant it, water it;

show what science, when given free rein, can do with the young mind.' These were the father's constant injunctions, and they were obeyed to the letter.

"The result for a long time seemed eminently satisfactory. At the age of fourteen the boy could write Latin and Greek hexameters fluently, could speak French, German, Italian, and Spanish as if each were his mother-tongue; and as for the -ometries and -ologies—why they were as familiar to him as marbles and pea-shooters to other lads of his age.

"Well, he was sent in due course to a university and entered the Arts' curriculum, which he passed over in a canter, outstripping all competitors, flattered, admired, worshipped by everyone, professors and fellow-students alike. At length, crowned with all the honors a university can confer, he entered the lists of that wider university—the world, and became editor of a high-class literary journal specially started for him by his father.

"The paper caused a tremendous sensation at the time, as it was brought out in the highest artistic form, and its articles were conceived and written in a boldly original style. For some

months everything went on at the high-pressure speed with which it had commenced. Then rumors began to be whispered that young ——, my seedy friend, was living with a fast set of young fellows, of whom he was bidding fair to become the fastest.

“Perhaps those rumors would have injured him very slightly, if at all, had he pulled himself up in time. But the articles in his paper became every day more disgusting for their delirious violations of taste and decorum. Healthy-minded readers stopped their subscriptions; financial difficulties cropped up; the paper fell to lower and lower depths of scurrility and filth; and finally the young man himself capped the climax of his ruin by a drunken freak which got into the press, but does not admit telling to one of your cloth. His father, who had mortgaged his own property to set up his son, became bankrupt and died of a broken heart, and the son became a social leper. He is now a confirmed drunkard, the associate of swindlers and card-sharpers, and—and—as hopeless a break-down as I have ever known.”

“But,” I asked as he concluded, “can nothing be done for the poor fellow? Surely he is not

beyond all hope of redemption. He may be got away from his vile surroundings. With judicious help he may take courage and make a fresh start in some other place. Of what religion is he?"

"He is of no religion," replied Jack. "I wish he were. His father stipulated expressly with his teachers that he was to be taught no religion. He has therefore grown up without any moral sense—at least that could be crushed out of him. The only solid ground left in him to work upon is his self-interest, and that you can scarcely reach, as he is always fuddled with drink or opium. I get him something to do in the press even still; but the proceeds all go to the saloon or to the gambling table. I fear it is mistaken kindness."

"I trust you have not many like him here in your city," I observed after a few moments' silence.

"Many like him!" exclaimed my friend, starting up. "Why, they may be counted in hundreds—perhaps thousands—within the limited circle of my own experience. And what is worse, they are of both sexes. I must say our school system is at the bottom of the whole mischief."

"How is that?"

“I’ll tell you ; although I fear you must have lost your old keenness of observation if you have not found it out for yourself. In our schools and colleges we educate the intellect as if it were the only faculty of man. Will training is scarcely recognized or known as a branch of the curriculum. The consequence is, we turn out every year at immense cost two-legged encyclopædias by the thousand, that are as unfitted to find or keep situations as their namesakes in calf there on the shelf. They have not been taught self-reliance ; they have not been taught self-discipline ; they have not been taught love of work ; they have not been taught the beauty and attractiveness of a well-regulated life ; they have not been taught to form to themselves a noble ideal for the guidance of their future. What is the consequence ? In many cases—I dread to say how many—work shirked or badly done ; employers cheated ; pleasure the object and end of life ; loss of character ; dismissal ; ruin. As for religion, they have been led to look on it as a gaunt, spectre-like figure, overshadowing and darkening all the brightness and joy of their young lives. Is it any wonder that when they get the opportunity they break from under the

shadow, and so deprive themselves of all the helps to cope with temptation that religion alone can give ?”

My friend's words, indorsed to a large extent by my own experience, kept me thinking long after I had retired to my room. “Would it be a help to the religious education of our children in schools and colleges if they were taught also ‘how to get on’ in life, how to gain and keep the respect of their neighbors, how to make their homes bright and happy? Would it be useful also to impress on them merely human motives for restraining their passions—for keeping temperate, pure, honest, truthful?” From the consideration of these questions sprang the first idea of the present work. I believe a life guided exclusively by spiritual or supernatural motives looks appalling, if not unreal, to the generality of Catholics. I have therefore taken reason, self-interest, social happiness, even respectability, each as a fulcrum by which I endeavor to raise the moral character toward the supernatural state. I know that nature has no power of its own to ascend to the level of grace, and I repeat this truth over and over in the course of the work; because it might seem from dwelling so

much on natural efforts and motives that I implied their sufficiency to sanctify the soul.

I guard the reader also against the error of supposing the will strong enough to practise virtue unaided by divine help. But still I certainly encourage him to cultivate natural strength and firmness of character, in order that grace may have better material to work on and to coöperate with. Those who expect God to do everything for them appear to me to err as much against Catholic faith on one side as the Pelagian or Semi-Pelagian errs on the other. The principle underlying my teaching on this matter in the course of the work is, I believe, a sound one. It is, that we must use our natural powers in the acquirement and practice of virtue, as though all success depended on them; and at the same time we must pray for help and rely on its efficacy, as if we could do nothing supernatural without it—as we really cannot.

It seems to me that the will is capable of a great deal more in the natural order than we generally suppose. But we take little or no pains to train this power of the soul as we train the intellect and memory. In our school system we teach implicitly that objects have but one essen-

tial element worthy of investigation, namely, truth. Now, as truth is the object of the intellect alone, we give all our attention to the cultivation of this faculty; and the consequence is two-fold. First, we turn out men as deformed intellectually as would be, in the physical order, human beings with the heads of giants on the bodies of dwarfs. In the second place, we give an untrue, because an imperfect and inadequate, idea of what we teach. Objects have other essential elements besides truth; and if our modern philosophers were not so much engaged with the mechanical properties of matter, they might learn from our scholastics that beauty and goodness (including utility) are quite as necessary as truth to our conceptions of things. Why not, then, train the will to appreciate and love what is beautiful and good in the spiritual, moral, and intellectual orders? If training of this kind were to become popular and universal, do you suppose we should have such excessive craving for animal enjoyment as characterizes modern society?

It may be asked what bearing have these remarks on the question "how to get on." The bearing is, I think, close and obvious. The will is the faculty of action, as the intellect is the

faculty of knowledge. Now, social, commercial, professional—in fact, life in all its grades and varieties—is made up of intelligent action, not of speculative truth. Moreover, if you wish to achieve success in any department of life, you must not only know the duties it imposes, but you must love them ; you must be heart and soul in them ; you must allow no side issue of pleasure, or interest, or temptation in any form, to distract your attention or lessen your ardor in doing them with all the intensity of your soul. But it is the will that is chiefly, if not solely, engaged in combining and securing these elements of success ; and it is impossible for it to do this work with any approach to perfection without careful training and discipline. It must be satisfied of the dignity of labor, the harmony and beauty of a well-regulated life, the superiority of rational over sensual pleasure, before the character be moulded in steadiness, uprightness, singleness of purpose, and all those other habits that go to make up an ideal citizen. Of what practical use is a university degree to a young man who has no control over his passions ? Put him into a situation and he loses it. Give him the most favorable launch in life, and he is sure to drift


in among "the weeds that rot on Lethe's wharf." Would it not have been infinitely better for him and for the society in which he lives if he had been schooled in energy and self-control and concentration, even at the expense of some of the book-knowledge by which he won his academic laurels, but cannot now win his bread?

These remarks are sufficient, I hope, to show the necessity of giving more attention to will-training in our schools than is generally given. In default of that attention, and as a help and guide to those young men who have already left school, I have written the following pages. I do not aim at writing a spiritual book or leading the reader to a high degree of perfection. I simply endeavor to save young men from the dangerous influences amid which they have to live. I know how impatient people are in the present day of being collared, in a figurative sense, and told they *must be* Christians. I adopt a different course: I try to guide them insensibly up to the conviction that the Christian form of life is, of all others, the most beautiful, the most attractive, the best adapted to the nature and longings of the soul. From this I lead them to infer that it is the only true and safe form to

embrace and follow. When I have brought them thus far, I trust to divine grace to do the rest. This reasoning is, however, more in the spirit of the book than in its professed aim and object; but I trust it will be none the less convincing and persuasive on that account.

CHAPTER II.

A HIGH IDEAL.

F you were about to get a house built, you would naturally go to an architect, tell him in a general way what kind of house you required, and then inform him how much money you intended to spend on it. The architect would probably take some time to consider how your ideas and wishes were to be carried out. He would spoil some sheets of paper in sketching plans, each coming nearer and nearer to include and reconcile all your conditions. At last he would strike on one requiring no more corrections. Here is the ground-plan of your house; here the front, side, rear elevations. Here is your drawing-room, there your dining-room. Here your library, your office, your kitchen and pantry; there, on the upper stories, your bed-rooms, bath-rooms, nursery, etc. And the cost of the whole is kept within the amount you specified. The plan is

complete, you are delighted with it, and you give orders for the immediate execution of the work.

Suppose, however, you determined to economize expenses by declining the services of an architect, and you employ a bricklayer to run up four walls with a certain number of holes in them for doors and windows. You then get a roof put on, and you find, when you look at the whole, that you have spent your money on an ugly, misshapen mass of brick and mortar.

Now, character is a kind of house that everyone has to *build up* around him. He *must* do it. Good or bad, refined or coarse, pleasant or unpleasant, character is always being built up, as an essential part of the work of life, ending only when we cease to live. Some pull down in an hour the labor of years; and then they have to begin afresh from the foundation. Some get disgusted with the collapse of their work, and build in defiance of every principle of taste and beauty. Others, however, take courage from failure, and learn by it to prevent or avoid its causes. These are chiefly the successful builders, whose work is not only a joy and pride to themselves, but a beautiful model to others.

A good character is not only pleasant to the

owner and his friends, but it is of more worth in the world's market than the highest university diploma. Honest, temperate, truthful young men (or women), devoted to their work and faithful to their employers, are at a high premium nowadays; while scholars, writers, bookkeepers, teachers, etc., are as "plenty as blackberries"—and as cheap. This is the result of the exclusive cultivation of the intellect in our public schools and colleges—in other words, of the unnatural separation of religion and education. I do not, however, intend to go into this branch of the subject at present. I merely wish to state an undeniable fact, that to get on in life character must be built up carefully and patiently, with judgment and forethought.

Convinced of this commercial value of character, a young man is liable to make a virtuous "splurt" that only exhausts his energies without doing a particle of good. He jumps up, smashes his pipe, throws his tobacco jar into the stove, and renounces the world, the flesh, and the devil, all in a heap. This impetuosity dies out in a day or two, and leaves the moral nature weaker than before. In character-building only slow, steady, uniform work endures.

The work, too, must begin from within. Some endeavor to make their edifices exteriorly handsome and pleasant to look at, while the interior is all darkness and disorder. But the first sudden squall of temptation brings the sham buildings toppling round their owners' heads. The work was not honest, and was bound to fall.

Character and manner are two distinct qualities, although often mistaken one for the other. Character is the individual moral nature, showing itself in a man's outer life. Manner, on the other hand, is a kind of dress-coat he is in the habit of wearing, and by which his friends recognize him at once. A crafty, selfish character is often found under a bland, polished manner. In fact, a man can never be judged by his manner alone. His true nature is seldom manifested in it; and when it is, you get only an imperfect glimpse of it at the best.

I began this chapter by alluding to the necessity of a detailed plan of any building we intend to erect. So, too, we must have a plan of the moral structure called character, which we build around us, if we wish that structure to be worthy of us. This plan is called an ideal.

Every one has, consciously or unconsciously,

some kind of ideal before his mind ; but very few, unfortunately, aspire to realize it. Men are generally too indolent, too material-minded, to make much effort to become like what they admire as beautiful and good. And so they let themselves drift down the current, receding daily farther and farther from the bright vision that beckons them to return.

Let old wiseheads say what they will—castle-building is a harmless, delightful occupation. You sit at a window on a beautiful summer evening, when the room is slowly darkening round you. You look away dreamily to the western horizon where the sun is setting, and your mind, akin to the parting light, follows it unconsciously and is soon lost in the dim shadowy future.

“What shall I be?”—thus your thoughts probably run on—“what shall I be in ten, twenty years to come? When I shall get past my work, and near the horizon, and look back on the time between now and then—shall I have reason to be proud of those years to come, be they many or few? I certainly should wish to leave my work in life carefully and neatly finished. I should be sorry that my name would put any friend of mine to the blush when I am dead.

It would be pleasant to think that whatever memory of me might remain in the minds of a few would be a help to them in their season of despondency or failure. Above all, how happy should I feel then were I to have the assurance, from a well-spent life, of a place of rest in the life to be!

“But what is to hinder me from realizing all this happiness I long for? The past? Yes; the past, alas! has been a sad failure and blunder. Youth wasted, energies squandered on worthless objects, talents misapplied, golden opportunities let glide by unheeded! And yet I feel that I can repair the past, draw a pen-stroke across it, and write: ‘All this is a mistake, and I wish it unwritten. Only what follows is the true record of my life.’”

You are probably interrupted at this stage of your reverie by being told (if you are a family man) that “tea is ready and missis is waiting.” You go down, and the realities of domestic life soon remove every vestige of your castle from your mind. Suppose, however, you take the opportunity of the next quiet hour you can get to continue the work. I think your reflections will probably take some such turn as the following:

“Let me see now what is the highest and most beautiful form of life to which I can practically aspire. Money-making is certainly the most ordinary channel in which run the lives of nearly all the men I know. It seems to be an engrossing and successful pursuit; but I don’t believe they are rendered happy by it. First of all, they are not social: there is a strained, unhealthy look about them; and they seem to enjoy none of the brightness or pleasures of life. They are too preoccupied and bilious to make friends; and they have no home-life worth speaking of. Then they never read, except the ‘Change and market columns of their newspapers. Art, poetry, literature, the drama—these are all classed in their minds with unprofitable investments or wild-goose speculations. Their children must take like views of them, and be brought up in the strictest principles of social economy.

“No; on the whole, I think I’ll not make money-grubbing a characteristic of my ideal life. If I earn enough, as I am determined to do, to keep my home comfortable and refined, to give my children a good education and a fair start in life, to be independent of the help of others when

the rainy day or old age comes round—this is enough for me. The moneyed man is loved only for his wealth. Whatever he think or be told to the contrary, his death is speculated on and longed for by his nearest friends. There is never a tear of genuine sorrow shed over his grave; and the folded parchment containing his will in his lawyer's desk is of more absorbing interest than all that remains of him on earth stowed away in its cold, dark, narrow cell.

“A life wholly devoted to pleasure seems, at first sight, highly attractive. But who can afford it? And if they could, who with any experience of its penalties would embrace it? ‘A merry evening,’ says Thomas à Kempis, ‘brings a sad morning;’ and the truth of the saying is verified by every one at some period of his existence. The man who lives for his own ease and enjoyment is necessarily a selfish, indolent, untrustworthy character. The slave of his passions, he can serve no other master with fidelity. He is at all times unamiable, and not rarely disgusting to those who know him. He can be cruel, too, to those connected with him or dependent on him. How often are the wives and children of drunkards left to starve in garrets, or go about dressed

in rags, while the drunkards themselves in some low saloon are screaming a chorus to some vile bacchanalian song! How often, too, is the happiness of a home blighted and the peace and honor of its members destroyed for life by the base treachery of the man of pleasure! But it is unnecessary to go on. Pleasure, as the end and object of life, has no charm for me. At its best, it is burning the candle at both ends; and even at that, the light it throws out is sickening to nauseousness.

“What about a life of ambition—a life given up to attaining some eminent position, or doing something to transmit one’s name to posterity? Such ambition, directed to a worthy object, is undoubtedly a powerful incentive to useful and praiseworthy activity. But it tends like all the other passions to ulcerate in the soul. It does not give the happiness it promises. Its fruit, however fair to look at, is bitter to the taste, and not worth the waste of soul required to reach it. Neither is it worth the jealousy and heart-burning caused in those whom the ambitious man leaves behind him. He must be prepared to hear those good people call him hard names, and shout his family history for many generations

after him in a very unpleasant way, and send stones and other missiles constantly whizzing round his ears.

“Yet I would not have my life wholly without ambition. If I honestly feel that I am fitted for a higher position than I hold, and can benefit others or myself in attaining it, it seems pusillanimity and indolence not to push forward and strive manfully for the coveted prize. But life is too short and precious to be altogether wasted in such pursuit. There is but one prize worth all the energy of a human soul; and that is a prize which does not depend on the world’s favor, and which death cannot snatch from us.

“Let me see, then, can I derive any help from these reflections in drawing a picture of the ideal life to which I ought to aspire. Such a life must make home bright and cheerful; it must make every one depending on it as happy as lies in its power to do. It must therefore leave glum looks (if any), business cares or reverses, in fact outside annoyances in general, at the hall-door or, better still, locked up in the office. It must not be the slave of money-getting, or of pleasure-seeking, or even of any overmastering ambition. Without being effeminate, it should cultivate re-

finer tastes, and surround itself with social and intellectual safeguards against vulgar and undignified habits. It should be orderly and self-possessed, trusted for its integrity and fidelity, respected for its genuine nobility, loved for the beautiful harmony and completeness by which it is distinguished. Above all, religion, sincere and unaffected, should be its very life-blood, transfusing, energizing, spiritualizing it from its simplest to its most vital action."

A life such as this would surely be worth living. It is not the highest and most perfect that could be imagined; but it is sufficiently high to make its attainment the object of any man's laudable ambition. Now, I say, every one should have some such ideal before him, if he wish to get on in life. It will be a safeguard to him against failure. It will be a stimulus to exertion when other motives cease to influence him. It will be the source of much happiness to himself and all around him; for, I am convinced, no one has more real enjoyment in living than he who lives for a noble object, and no example can be more cheerful and inspiring than his to every one who comes in contact with him.

Form, then, dear reader, if you have not done

so already, a high ideal, suited to your position, to which you may aspire. Keep it always before you, and resolve to do nothing unworthy of it. Let it, however, be not altogether of earth. Have in it every human element you wish ; but let its spirit be divine. No other ideal can purify and elevate life. None else satisfies the soul. An ideal without religion may seem to work while we are plunged in the maddening whirlpool of worldly excitement and pleasure. But in our quiet, solitary moments it disappoints us. In old age it disappoints us still more ; and at the approach of death, it crumbles into dust like a mummy exposed to light and air. Then it disappoints us most of all.

I must guard you, however, against making one serious mistake in this matter. Do not lose courage if you find you cannot realize your ideal in a week or a month. Keep on with a strong, cheerful, indomitable will ; and be assured you are making progress, although you may not perceive it, as long as you do not give up the struggle. "It is perfection," wrote once a noble, saintly woman, "to strive after perfection." So, too, it may be said of you that you have really reached a magnificent ideal, when you have once made "Excelsior" your motto.

CHAPTER III.

BE DETERMINED TO SUCCEED.



ONCE read, when a child, a saying of Lord Brougham's which has ever since clung to my mind, and has exercised some influence over me, although I have come to see that, when closely analyzed, it has not much to recommend it. The saying is: "The word Impossible is the mother-tongue of little minds." No doubt the writer meant that little minds are too apt to declare difficult things impossible, and to shrink, in consequence, from attempting them. But I am convinced that the minds which do so are not little so much as indolent and effeminate. In proof of this view, how often do we find men of bright intelligence and high culture reclining among the lotus eaters, sunning themselves on the banks of Lethe? With them the *mind* is large and broad enough; but the *will* has no sufficient stimulus to rouse it to action; and so they deem impossible what they have not energy

to undertake. Life for them has no prize worth fighting for. Ambition? It is but a feverish dream. Wealth? A low, ignoble pursuit. Pleasure? "We enjoy it," they tell you, "in its highest perfection."

I do not intend to enter into dispute with those *dolce far niente* philosophers. I only hope, for their own sakes, that the river may one day rise and flood the green, sunny banks on which they pass their indolent lives. In that event they will find that human existence has a higher destiny than to be dreamt away in luxuriant ease, and that to accomplish that destiny energy of will is absolutely essential.

Now, energy of will is precisely what I purpose speaking of in the present chapter. You may have often remarked how very differently some people get on in life under exactly similar conditions and circumstances. Here are two farmers, for instance, with two holdings of land of equal fertility. One, in a chronic state of poverty and debt, is forever grumbling against the weather, against legislation, against his laborers and his wife and children, against everything under heaven except himself. The other tells you cheerfully, things might be better with him and

they might be a great deal worse. He admits he is making money on his farm and hopes to raise the mortgage off it in a few years. He keeps a decent home, a good table, contented servants, and he sends his children to boarding-schools for their education.

You are curious to know whence comes the difference between these men's success; and if you watch them closely, you will soon find it out. The former has neither talent nor taste for farming—knows no more about it, in fact, than his young baby. He accordingly employs a land steward with whose arrangements he is constantly tampering. The consequence is, there is no uniform system of management; there is no energy or intelligence brought to bear on it; "the hands" do at the highest wages as little as they can, and seem with the steward to be in competition with their master for a grumbling prize. Result, failure.

The other farmer, on the contrary, brings hand and brain to bear on his work. He is out on his farm late and early, in direct communication with his workmen, whom he inspires with his own spirit and enthusiasm. There are no briers or weeds to be found on his headlands or in the

corners of his fences. None of his machinery is left out to wear itself away in rust during the winter months. He does not confine himself to mere crop-raising, as he cannot keep all his land in tillage. His breed of stock is well selected and well cared for, and brings the highest prices in the market. In a word, he throws himself into his work with energy and enthusiasm, and he succeeds.

Let us take another case. Two young lads, of nearly the same age, are in the same class at college. One is exceptionally bright and talented, and leads all the rest. The other is industrious, slow, and plodding, and barely passes his examinations. At the end of their course, both get commercial diplomas and enter as clerks into the same bank. The former looks on his business as a bore and drag, and does his work in a mechanical, half-hearted way. His mind, during office hours, is in the base-ball field or in the billiard-room, and his conversation is all about the last or the next ball, and other social chit-chat. The latter is interested in his work, and resolves to succeed in it. He thinks of nothing else; and the consequence is, there are no mistakes in his figures, no slovenliness about his

writing. His employer, or the chief of his department, with a keen eye to the welfare of the bank, sees very soon which of the two is the more trustworthy and the more valuable official. The talent that held the first place at school and was perhaps made too much of by masters and pupils alike, in business is of secondary consideration. Energy and fidelity, steadiness and love of work, are the subject-matter of examination for the world's diplomas. Therefore the gold-medalist, and the prize-essayist, and the student choke-full of the-ologies, must look sharp if he intend to keep first in the race of life.

Well, a few years pass, and we find a wonderful difference between the two young men. The one who had been slowest at school has been advanced to the office of cashier, while the other is still at his first desk. Even there he is an object of mistrust and anxiety to his employer. He has been more than once called into the manager's office and reprimanded for negligences and omissions. It is even whispered among his fellow-clerks that if his father's account at the bank were not so large and his patronage so valuable, the unfortunate young man would have been long ago dismissed.

So far I have made a merely imaginary case. I will now tell from my own personal knowledge what has been the end of another bank official of similar character and placed in similar circumstances. Sent away without a character, in spite of the strongest influence exerted in his favor, he emigrated to South America, where he became a peon or general servant to a former workman of his father's. There, also, his unsteady habits accompanied him, and he lost his place. He was last heard of as a drunken billiard-marker in a low, wayside saloon.

If a child learning to walk be shown some candy or a rocking-horse, it will at once try to toddle towards it, even at the risk of several falls along the way. But if you merely hold out your empty hand to it and beckon it to come, the same child will most probably shake its little head and give you plainly to understand that it sees no sufficient reason to make the effort. Simple as this fact is, it goes far to explain why and how men succeed in life. They keep the end always in view. Their minds constantly dwell on its advantages, its utility—the pleasure or happiness it will bring. Every circumstance that can enhance its attractiveness is turned over and

over, until they are prepared to make any sacrifice to attain it.

It requires long and prudent reflection to choose a career in life. The reasons for it and against it should be carefully weighed. But when once chosen, the soul should stretch out towards it with all the strength and intensity of its nature. No thought of change should ever be allowed to enter the mind. A false start is generally fatal to success; because the energy wasted in turning round, and the time lost in beginning afresh, as well as the discouragement of failure, are all elements of weakness. Still, better a thousand times a new beginning, when it is possible, than dragging through life the gall-ing chain of an unsuitable vocation or career. I know no slavery more cruel than this; no misery more pitiable. It sours the joys of life, turns hope into despair, and makes earth a sort of incipient hell.

Supposing, then, that you have already decided and entered on a career, profession, or calling of any kind, which for some reason you cannot give up, I advise you strongly, if you value your peace of mind and wish to save your life from failure, to seek out all possible reasons

for loving that career and becoming attached to it. Drive away all craving for what may not be. Turn your mind from it, as from a deadly temptation. Every beginning is hard. You will, no doubt, chafe and fume for a little at the thought that you are bound for life to something sickening and hateful as the human carcass they formerly bound to a murderer, compelling him to carry it about with him wherever he went. But we soon adapt ourselves to the inevitable, no matter how disagreeable it be. Habit reconciles us to it, and companionship after a time disposes us in its favor.

There is good in everything, even in a career unwisely chosen. But this good has to be found out; it does not always present itself at first view. A piece of quartz is a dull, heavy, unshapen lump of earth. Yet when men come to know its value, they dig deep into the earth, and cut their way through rocks, and endanger their lives to obtain it. So, too, with a career. It may be humble, ill-paid, laborious; it may seem to have no future before it; it may be commonplace and unromantic, as the realities of life generally are. But it is, at least, honest and independent. It does as well as one more brilliant

and ambitious to develop steadiness, love of duty, trustworthiness. It helps as well as another, or at least may be made to help, to keep home bright and cheerful. Were your social position higher and your occupation a sinecure, you would never enjoy the luxury of rest in the bosom of your family after a hard day's honest work. In the world of fashion there is no home-life, no domestic happiness. That whirl of gayety and dissipation among the wealthy which outsiders envy so keenly is a circle revolving round much unhealthiness and uncleanness. Were you to know all, you would thank God that your lot is not cast in high places.

The more you keep looking at the bright side of your place in life, the brighter it will become, and the lighter and easier will seem the duties it imposes. But there is one consideration which, more than all others, outside of supernatural motives, will reconcile you to your position. It is the intrinsic dignity of labor, no matter of what kind it be. There is a difficulty in bringing this truth home to minds unused to abstract reasoning. I will try, however, to explain it as clearly as possible.

Suppose a child were to be kept swathed,

hands and feet, from its birth until it reached the years of manhood; for what would it be fitted? Could it stand, walk, run, feed itself? Would it not be a most pitiable object in its undeveloped, helpless condition? Now, the want in that grown-up child, the complete development of manhood, that which gives manhood its highest natural perfection, is simply labor. Labor, then, is the necessary complement, the culminating perfection of our nature.

Take another case. Let a child, instead of being swathed in bands, be kept apart from all society. Let it be fed and clothed by invisible hands. Let it never see a human face, never hear a human voice, never get an opportunity of acquiring a particle of knowledge. What will it be at the age of manhood? Simply an idiot, an imbecile; because its soul will be devoid of the development which brain-work alone could have given it. A field, lying fallow and covered with rank weeds, does not contrast so strikingly with another, bearing a rich, golden harvest, as an aimless, idle man does with one in whom mind and muscle are both equally developed by labor.

But if you wish to know the highest dignity of labor, you must learn it from Christianity, the

sole true teacher of all noble and sublime ideas. "Mankind," Christianity tells you, "are all equal in three essential respects: in having the same origin, God; in having the same final purpose, eternal life; and in being able to attain that purpose on the same condition—personal effort, labor." Therefore, according to the Christian idea, heaven may be scaled, its heights may be conquered; those vast, unnumbered worlds which we behold at night may be set under our feet; life after death may be made supremely and eternally happy—in a word, all the wildest dreams of the visionary may be realized, without wealth, or station, or high birth, solely (as far as depends on us) by personal labor properly directed and faithfully done.

Labor, then, is the raw material supplied to man out of which (again, as far as he is concerned) the price of his redemption and salvation must be obtained. Its kind is a matter of absolute indifference. It may be skilled or unskilled, mental or bodily, respectable or vile (in the world's estimation); these distinctions are of no account whatever, provided the labor be honest and honestly performed.

In this view, how blind and narrow looks the

present world-wide agitation for the rights of labor—for an eight hours' working-day! Not that justice and humanity do not underlie the movement, because they assuredly do, but because it is a painful revelation of how far the laborer has drifted from a true knowledge of the dignity of his manhood. It is only in its lowest aspect that labor is a purchasable commodity; yet in that aspect alone is it nowadays considered, and bought and sold in the world's market.

These considerations, dear reader, will, I trust, lead you to form a high idea of your work in life, no matter how humble that work may be, and to throw yourself into it with energy and resolute will, determined to succeed. Let us now see in what success consists, and what should be the characteristics of the determination with which we should strive for it.

Success in life, as I have stated already, does not depend on the world's estimate of your calling or profession. It depends solely on the knowledge or skill you bring to it, on the energy with which you work at it, on the whole-souled devotion with which you are absorbed in it. By these means you build up a character for yourself that becomes daily more and more esteemed

and respected by those who come in contact with you. "Your word is good as a bond." Your steadiness, fidelity, reliability, is never called in question. You are looked up to within your own sphere, by some with envy, by others with admiration; but all agree in regarding you as one who has deservedly attained the highest possible success.


Now, you will surely admit that such success is worth striving for. How, then, should you begin to acquire it? First and chiefly, by determination. Make success, unqualified and absolute, a leading feature of the ideal you keep before you. Aim at small and frequent rather than great advances. Remember the lines of our national poet:

"We have not wings, we cannot soar;
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The lofty summit of our time."

In this way our determination to succeed will be easy and practical, not spasmodic and exhausting; and its results will become visible much sooner than we expect.

CHAPTER IV.

SOME WAYS AND MEANS OF SUCCESS.

HEN you have filled your mind with a strong settled determination to succeed in your work, you will naturally turn to consider the best means to adopt for the accomplishment of your purpose. In the present chapter I will group together some of those means.

First and above all, let your work be *honest*. I use the word in its broadest sense to signify not only what is just, but what is sterling, sound, genuine, sincere. The trite old saying, "Honesty is the best policy," has its foundation in nature and is universally true ; for honesty begets confidence, and confidence is worth more than capital in the pursuit of success. There is no profession or business in which honesty may not be practised. The physician, the lawyer, the merchant, the farmer—every one, in fact, who has dealings with his fellow-man, is bound to strict honesty in

those dealings, not only as a condition of a Christian life and of moral uprightness, but also as a necessary stepping-stone to success. I know nothing that brings to a lower level a man's character and moral tone than laxity in the application of this principle. Yet "smartness" covers a great deal of such laxity; and we all know that smartness is looked on with indulgence, if not with positive approval, by many who ought to know better.

I don't believe, however, that smartness generally succeeds, even though we regard success in its lowest form of driving a good bargain or getting into Congress. The smart man usually becomes too smart and overreaches himself, getting into the clutches of the law on the ugly charges of swindling or embezzlement.

I need not point out the evil influence of a smart man on his children. No amount of education at college or university can counteract it. They are smart on a small scale with their professors and fellow-students, and on a larger with their customers or clients when, as doctors or lawyers, they take their money without making them any honest return.

"Whatever pays is honest," a merchant told

me once over his counter. A few nights afterwards an assistant absconded with the man's daughter and a large sum of money. "It paid," because the young couple were never caught; but I don't think the doubly-robbed merchant would say the transaction was quite honest.

Dishonest people never think of putting themselves in the place of their victims and asking themselves how they would feel. If they did, they might perhaps reform; but it is very doubtful.

Some allege in excuse or palliation of dishonesty, that "every one cheats in business; there is no getting on without it." The reply to this is simple and straightforward. Leave any business in which you cannot honestly succeed. "Easier said than done," they remark with a shrug. Yes; but for all that, "Honesty is the best policy."

The obligation of restitution, which follows dishonesty like its shadow, seems to be completely ignored by dishonest persons. But in old age, and especially at the approach of death, the shadow grows dark and threatening, and the stricken conscience cowers and trembles before it. "How can you stand before your judge,"

it seems to hiss into the soul, "with all those sins of injustice against you?" We may think it painful to see a man disgraced and ruined by being convicted in open court of fraud and cheating, and condemned to the penitentiary for a term of years. But at the approach of death, were the choice given him, he would gladly spend, not a term of years, but a whole lifetime, in the foulest convict-cell, rather than go into eternity laden with unrepaid sins against his fellow-man.

It would be easy to dilate on the injury done to general society by the prevalence of unjust dealing in commercial and political life. I deem it, however, more practical to advise parents and teachers to stamp out the first sign of dishonesty in the children under their care. Those who have charge of the young should also be strictly just and impartial in their own conduct. It is questionable if we have any very strong, natural tendency to wrong our neighbor; but example sows in the young soul many seeds of corruption that, without it, would never have grown there. Good example, then, and suitable correction are the two influences which, outside religion, can

best instil the principles of honest dealing into the rising generation.

The next recommendation I have to make is this : Do your work *with a will* ; throw your heart and soul into it ; let it be your ambition and pride to send it from your hands as complete and perfect as hands could have made it. Work so done appears, indeed, the only work worthy of being called honest ; and hence it may seem that I am here only continuing the subject already treated. But there is a difference between barely honest work and what I may be allowed to call will-work. A man may keep to the letter of his contract and fulfil every express requirement of it, yet do his work in a stinted, grudging, mechanical manner. Another, profoundly interested in whatever he undertakes, and loving it for itself, not for the money it brings, gives his undivided attention to every slightest detail of it. He never pauses to think whether or not he be paid to give it this or that finishing touch. He gives it, if he believe it to be necessary. So, too, if he see something going wrong, although it is not his business to set it right, he does set it right notwithstanding, because otherwise his work would suffer in completeness and finish.

Now, which of these two men turns out the better work? Unquestionably the latter. I know he may be called by "society" men a sneak or a greenhorn for putting into his work anything for which he is not paid. But here again breaks out the low, serfsh idea of labor to which I have already alluded. The truth is, the man who puts his will into his work for his employer is paid in something far more precious than money.

For, first, the work, being a labor of love, is easier and pleasanter than if it were done against the grain of the soul, as a mere task. There is, therefore, less fatigue in it, less wear and tear of muscle and tissue, less waste of energy on it. The soul, when thrown into any work, lightens the strain on the body and relieves the physical organs. Hence force is gained and held in reserve for future exertion that would otherwise have to be expended. This reasoning may seem fanciful to some; but I think most people's experience will supply them with proofs of its conclusiveness.

Another important gain of *working with a will* is the esteem and confidence of the employer secured by it. The importance of this gain can

scarcely be over-estimated. It gives permanence to the workman's position, making him a necessity to the establishment in which he is engaged. It also helps materially to his promotion and consequent increase of salary or wages. His personal character, too, is raised by it, for no one would think of classing him with the common hireling, good for little more than to grumble at the lowness of wages and the tyranny of capital.

The third help to success that I have to suggest is *punctuality* and *order*. Have a time and place for everything; do everything at its fixed time; keep everything in its proper place. This rule looks charming in print. Some people are so much taken by it that they copy it out on card-board in neat handwriting, headed, "Rule of Life—Resolved. . . ." They hang up the precious document in their bed rooms, and really have a vague intention of squaring their lives by it. Probably they set about putting it in execution at once, by turning their apartments topsy-turvy, with the idea of setting things to rights—getting the servants afterwards to finish the work. But that very night, they are in the middle of an interesting story, when their rule obliges them to go to bed. "A time for everything—10 o'clock

P.M., bed." They hesitate—consider. Yes; they have got a way out of the difficulty. They will not begin till to-morrow; then they will set to in earnest. Well, to-morrow comes. They rise some two hours after their appointed time; but that could not be helped, they think. No one in his senses, lying awake reading a story up to one o'clock in the morning, could be expected to rise at six. The day passes, and every hour brings its own reason for deferring or omitting the duty allotted to it. They get disheartened, and consider punctuality and order very easy and pleasant for others, but out of the question in such a home as theirs. Accordingly, they turn the face of their rule of life to the wall, somewhat as they treat a naughty child, and go on in their old manner of life.

Now, the mistake those good people made was that they undertook too much at once. One cannot change from irregular to punctual and orderly habits in a single day. It requires time and patience and courage to conform one's self satisfactorily to a strict rule of life. Begin, then, with punctuality in essential duties. For instance: you have to be at your work or in your office at a certain hour. You are, however, generally

late, sometimes ten minutes, sometimes fifteen, sometimes you do not go at all in the morning. Now, whether you are in the employment of others or doing business for yourself, you are injuring materially your prospects of success by such irregularity. Your business or professional character is being undermined by it; and you require to be an exceptionally *strong* man to hold your own against so serious a drawback. If, then, you value success and are resolved to win it, be punctual. Arrange your mornings in such a way, and make such allowance for unforeseen accidents, that you will always be at your work when the clock strikes the hour to begin. Some men who have written their names in history made a rule to be at their post a quarter of an hour before their appointed time. They took pride in after-days in attributing their fame, not so much to genius or talent, as to their observance of this golden rule.

Habits of punctuality and order will soon follow, if we form in our minds a true estimate of the value of time. Time is the succession of opportunities to prepare and perfect ourselves for a new and supremely happy life to which death is the entrance. Those opportunities go by us more

rapidly than thought can conceive or grasp. They never return. Others like them will come ; but they will not be the same as those that have passed. These are awaiting us in eternity to give testimony for us or against, according to the manner in which we shall have used or abused them. While you are reading these lines and pondering on their application to your own past and future, time is rushing past you with more than lightning speed, and the end is approaching with equal rapidity.

Now, in the light of this truth, how unaccountable seems our treatment of time ! We all waste more or less of it in unworthy pursuits ; and many of us make it our life-long study to find the best means of killing it.

Economy of time, then, is a duty of supreme importance ; and from this duty arises the corresponding one of ordering our lives and surroundings in such a way as to make them models of systematic arrangement. If we cannot do this all at once, we can resolve to begin and contribute a little towards it every day. And we need not be discouraged or disappointed by unsatisfactory results, for we have this consoling truth to fall back upon, that the only kind of perfection

attainable in this life consists in the honest resolution of becoming perfect and of adopting the best means to that end.

I will finish this chapter by a recommendation which, although negative, conduces very much to success. *Don't be a Jack-of-all-trades.* "Let the shoemaker keep to his last" is a very old proverb, embodying a profound philosophic truth. We don't expect shoemakers to be tailors, or tailors carpenters, or carpenters bricklayers. Much less do we expect any one man to combine in himself a practical knowledge of all these trades. We not only do not expect this, but we do not believe in it; and we are right. If we wish to employ a carpenter, we naturally look for one who is master of his business; and our chief test of his being so is his devotion to his work and his entire absorption in it. If we find him professing mastery of all trades, and indifferent to any one in particular, we conclude that a less phenomenal character is quite good enough for us, and we search elsewhere for what we want.

Thus a man's business or professional character is generally lessened by the knowledge that "he can turn his hand to anything." He may

indeed turn his hand to anything ; but it is more than questionable if he can succeed in anything. There seems to be a tendency in us—whether from nature or early surroundings need not be inquired—to devote ourselves to one pursuit in preference to all others. We feel specially drawn towards it ; and if we follow the attraction, we take our place in the ranks of the world's successful workers. But if we allow ourselves to be drawn aside by the temptation of working in our neighbor's field instead of our own, we waste the time and energy that should have been concentrated on a single purpose as a condition of our success.

I do not mean, of course, that a man of one pursuit is to be wholly ignorant of everything outside it. An artisan may very healthfully occupy an hour or two of his mornings and evenings in cultivating his little patch of garden, the more skilfully the better. A physician may find it useful to know how to shoe his horse, or to put up some shelves in his surgery. A farmer will be benefited by being able to repair his machinery without sending it to the nearest blacksmith. It is, in a word, most useful and advisable that we should combine with the special

knowledge of our trade or profession as much general or even technical and practical knowledge as we can acquire. But what I would insist on is that a man with any ambition of success in him should not profess to be doctor, lawyer, engineer, and tailor, all rolled into one. He should not pose before the public with a lancet in one hand, and a digest of law in the other; a square and compass stuck in his waistband, and a tailor's measure thrown around his neck. The world generally leaves such a man "severely alone."

It may be well to mention here another negative help to success. If you wish to excite no prejudice against yourself or your work, do not boast of it, and do not run down others of your own trade or profession. All true greatness is humble-minded, and they are for the most only charlatans who go about blowing their praises on their own trumpets. If God has given you special talents, do not seek to rob Him of the glory of them. Let others praise you if they will: and they are sure to do so, sooner or later, if you deserve it. But the world judges rightly that the man who exalts his own work and depreciates his neighbor's, has little or no sterling worth in him.

CHAPTER V.

HEALTHY TONE OF MIND.



THE mind should be kept in healthy tone, as a condition of getting from our lives the largest possible amount of useful work. The health of the body, too, requires careful attention ; but I do not think it necessary to speak of it here, because if the mind be kept in a sound state, the soundness of the body will be necessarily provided for.

In what, then, does a healthy tone of mind consist? We shall best understand the answer to this question by taking illustrations from the body in a healthy condition. Without touching on the science of hygiene, we say the body is in sound health when it is free from pain or disease, has a keen relish for wholesome food, and is instinct with animal life and activity. Now conditions analogous to these constitute the health of the mind, and establish in it the tone or habit most conducive to the natural perfection of life.

The principal and most appalling disease of the mind is insanity, of which, however, it is not necessary to speak here. But there are many other mental diseases besides insanity. Let us examine a few of them.

Look at that tall middle-aged man going past on the other side of the street. He is an enterprising, wealthy merchant, and most amiable in all his social and domestic relations. But he has made many enemies and suffered immense losses in business by his blind, unreasoning prejudice against Catholics and the Catholic Church.

That man is not more convinced of his own identity than he is of the Pope being antichrist and the Jesuits, and Catholic priests generally, being his satellites. He acts up to his convictions and gives all the annoyance in his power to the Church. His Protestant friends and acquaintances laugh at him and consider him crazed on the matter of religion.

But craziness has nothing to do with his state of mind. His is simply an extreme case of irrational conviction. He is so persuaded of the truth of what he believes about Catholics that his intellect and will are both closed and set against argument. In truth, the will is more at

fault than the intellect, inasmuch as it restrains the latter from entertaining or weighing the reasons on the opposite side.

From the spread of education and the wider knowledge we have acquired of our fellow-men, such religious prejudice is now, thank God, dying out. But others still live among us and are doing much to make life narrow and unpleasant. Race, politics, capital, cheap labor, protection, prohibition—these and many other questions of our day are subjects on which we are all liable from our school-days to have formed biassed and irrational judgments. Now in our maturer years, on account of those early impressions, we find it extremely difficult to shake them off, our prejudices preventing us from considering them in a healthy frame of mind.

Prejudice, then, is an unhealthy tone of the mind, for it affects the free and legitimate action of the understanding, somewhat as paralysis affects the members of the body. If we wish to rid ourselves or keep free of this mental disease, we must cultivate broad and tolerant ideas and views. We must respect the convictions of others, while we hold firmly to our own. We must repress all impatience of narrow-mind-

edness, bigotry, and political or social one-sidedness. Charity and self-interest unite in recommending this course. If our friends do not look perfect in our eyes, we should remember that neither do we look perfect in theirs. The world is wide enough for us all to live in pleasant, neighborly good-will one with another. Free from prejudice, we go smoothly through life, as a stone without sharp corners rolls smoothly along the ground.

I need not say that the broad-minded tolerance recommended here has no affinity to the odious, time-serving practice of *trimming*. If we have solid grounds for fixed opinions, we should adhere to them unflinchingly, and act on them when necessary. Professing neutrality from self-interest, or holding our vote in reserve for the highest bidder, is putting a money price on the divine birthright of our manhood.

Cynicism is another unhealthy condition of mind. The word owes its origin, in the days of Greek civilization, to the palpable likeness between a snappish, surly, growling man and a snarling cur-dog. It speaks ill for the healthy tone of the world of fashion that modified cynicism is considered the ideal of good form. "Ad-

mire nothing ; never give way to enthusiasm ; call what is perfect barely tolerable ; avoid sentiment ; be bored by everything"—these with others of like tenor are nowadays first principles in the education of a gentleman (or lady) who aspires to enter the charmed circle of "high life." They give in a general way the outward form of a modern cynic ; and it may be seen that they aim at crushing the noblest and best part of our nature out of us.

For what would the world be without the beauty with which it is clothed, and the admiration and delight which that beauty excites ? What would human intercourse become without the stimulus of applause, honor, or fame ? What would man himself be without the capacity of genius, heroism, virtue, enthusiasm ? As long as we remain what we are, we will admire and endeavor to imitate whatever is beautiful and good. Our feelings shall find expression in ardent, emotional language ; and cynicism shall be at a discount wherever human nature is healthiest and purest.

Every characteristic of an unamiable man may be found in the cynic. He is affected, insolent, sour-tempered, sarcastic. He has no friends, ex-

cept a few weak-minded parasites be called such. He is feared by many who have social backslidings to hide; for no one can have a keener eye and ear for scandal than he, or a sharper tongue to spread it. Others court his society because, from his supercilious manner, they think him an aristocrat of the first water; and although they be free-born Americans, they worship rank and birth.—But, I trust, I have said enough to put you on your guard against the unhealthy influence of this cancerous disease of cynicism.

A mind of healthy tone is always placid and even-tempered. It is not subject to sudden squalls of anger or passion, nor is it provoked by the anger or passion of others. This mastery over one's self is difficult to be acquired; yet it is an element very necessary to the perfection of life, and even to material success.

“Anger is a brief madness;” but it is a madness we may escape by assiduous watchfulness over its first movements, and by the study of its consequences.

An angry man can never be a good man of business; for whether he be employer or employé, he does not get on well with those around him. He loses several important opportunities

and chances by his outbreaks of temper; and sometimes he destroys in a fit of uncontrolled passion the character and work he has been building up for years.

Anger often has its chief source in physical causes. A man's system gets out of order, and his mind in consequence becomes irritable and impatient. He can make no allowance for shortcomings; and perfection itself cannot satisfy him.

When this is so, medical advice should, of course, be sought, and the cause, as far as possible, removed. But even in such a state, the will has the power of repressing anger and maintaining self-possession, if we be on our guard against the first promptings of resentment. A spark is easily put out by a stamp of the foot; but if it be left to glow amid favorable surroundings, it soon becomes a raging, uncontrollable fire. So it is with anger and, indeed, with all the cravings and suggestions of our lower nature. They are weak and easily put aside in their commencement; but they grow apace if not checked, and after a little they overpower the will and hold it in captivity.

The second mark of sound physical health,

given at the beginning of this chapter, is a relish or appetite for wholesome food. Now, the food of the mind is reading or study, and observation. Through these two channels we are receiving at every conscious moment of our lives a constant supply of crude, miscellaneous knowledge on which the mind ruminates, assimilating a greater or less proportion of it according to the nature of the food and the healthiness of the mind itself.

To speak in plain language, our minds are constantly acquiring knowledge; and that knowledge goes far towards the formation of our character. If we read spiritual books, they incline us strongly to a spiritual life. If we read infidel or atheistic books, we feel ourselves slipping gradually into infidelity or atheism. If we read the lives of eminent men, we glow with admiration, and are inspired with the ambition of imitating them.

Then again, observation of what is going on around us is forever exercising its influence for good or evil over us. If we have the happiness of coming in contact only with men of virtue and culture and refinement, our character and habits will be insensibly drawn up to their level and shaped after their example. But, on the other

hand, if our lot be cast among coarse, vicious companions, or if we voluntarily frequent their society, the current of their lives will almost certainly bear us down with it, unless we consult our safety by withdrawing ourselves, if possible, from its influence.

It is extremely difficult to safeguard our minds from the more or less poisonous influences that lie in many of the men and books forced on our acquaintance. It is easy to recommend: "Avoid the man; cast the book from you." But the man may be our next neighbor in the office or the workshop; and the book may have gained such a fascination over us, before we see its drift and danger, that now we can scarcely take our eyes off it until we read it to the end.

It is in cases of this kind that the want of religious helps is most felt; because the conviction is forced on us that no fixed moral principle, no natural or acquired firmness of character, no human effort, can stay the will when determined on a downward course, or resist the influence of poisonous words, backed with sneers and ridicule, and the scoffs and mockery of a roomful of companions.

Outside those religious helps, of which I shall

speaking in detail toward the end of the present work, I can only recommend you extreme care in the selection of your books and companions. Cultivate a refined, intellectual taste, by reading only works of high standard. Repress that prurient craving for sensational novels, so universal in our day. Feed the intellect and the will rather than the imagination. Above all, keep ever in mind that the spiritual and the earthly, the divine and the bestial, unite in you (as in every human being) to constitute your nature. Your first and noblest work in this world is to make the spiritual and divine triumph in your life. This is the only true philosophy, which, however, religion alone can enable you to put in practice.

Activity is the third characteristic of a healthy tone of mind. It is opposed to idleness, sloth, and lethargy; it is sustained by the ambition to succeed or excel; and rivalry or opposition serves only to intensify it to white heat and make it strain every faculty of mind and muscle of body in the neck-to-neck race for victory.

In a country like this, where the keenest competition prevails in every trade and profession, it is scarcely necessary to caution men against idleness and sloth. Self-interest or, what is consid-

ered the same, love of wealth, is a sufficient incentive to activity; and if it fail, no amount of advice is likely to succeed.

However, there is a certain amount of mental unhealthiness in excessive activity. What burns intensely soon goes out. It would be false economy to pour the oil of your lamp into a basin and apply a match to it, for the purpose of getting a brighter light. The light, no doubt, is much brighter while it lasts ; but when, after a little, you are left in darkness, you think it would have been much more prudent to leave the oil in the lamp and let it burn on slowly.

There is a high-pressure speed at which life may be kept for a while; but it wears out the machinery quickly, and there is a collapse, a break-down—often an explosion. Many cases of insanity and of kindred diseases, and not a few suicides, are due to unregulated, excessive activity.


Have a time for daily relaxation of mind in any plan of life you form. Don't think it is unnecessary, as you are apt to do when occupied in some engrossing pursuit or work. Make allowance with prudent foresight for the reaction that is sure to set in ; and don't expose yourself to the danger of breaking afterwards through your plan,

because you find you had drawn its lines too tightly around you.

Cheerfulness, affability, and love of home and home influences are three other indications of a sound, healthy-minded man which should not be passed over without notice. However, I consider them and other kindred matters of such importance that I have reserved them for a distinct chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

CHEERFULNESS, ETC.

 HIS world of ours, with all its drawbacks, has a great deal of brightness and joy in it; and its sadness and misery are very much of our own making. We have a gloomy habit of looking at the dark side of things and closing our eyes to the bright; and the natural, inevitable result is a nasty, deformed picture to which we point, and cry out with a groan of despair, "Such is life!"

No, my pessimist friend; such is *not* life, as I hope to be able to show you. "There," you say, "is a poor man, with a large family, out of work, some of his children lying ill of fever, his wife given to drink, his rent in arrears, and never a cent in the house to buy a loaf of bread. Where is there a single ray of brightness in that home?"

Assuredly, a sad case that, I admit; but rather extreme, is it not? Why not have taken your picture from the family living next door instead?

They are in the same position in life, and have merely the same means of getting on as those you have described. Yet they are apparently comfortable and happy. The children are neatly dressed and look bright and healthy. The mother bustles about cheerily from morning to night (when she is not at the wash-tub or the sewing-machine), keeping everything in apple-pie order. The father, who is at work during the day, has a pleasant fireside to rest by in the evening. He is never out of employment, because he has established a character for honesty, ability, and trustworthiness. Instead of being in debt or in arrears to his landlord, he lays by some of his wages every month, and hopes before long to be able to buy the house in which he lives.

Now, if you wish to draw a true picture of life, you must paint the colors as life presents them, the bright as well as the dark, and the latter only in their due proportion.

Moreover, misery brought on ourselves or our family, by imprudence of any kind, does not tell against the happiness we have it in our power to create within us and around us; and it is only of such happiness I speak here. No one can close

his eyes to the wrecked homes and lives suggested by our penitentiaries, hospitals, and asylums. But the wreck, in the vast majority of cases, is the deliberate doing of the victims themselves. It is the long-foreseen result of intemperance, or dishonesty, or of fast, imprudent living of some kind.

A great deal of our unhappiness is also due to discontentment. Here is a man in a comfortable position and earning a good salary, who makes himself and all around him miserable because his employer is a millionaire and can afford to live in luxury.

“Why,” he exclaims to some choice companions (communists like himself), in a downtown saloon—“Why do those men wallow in every luxury that money can buy, while we have to sweat and toil twelve hours out of the twenty-four for our miserable grub? What are they more than we? What were their fathers more than ours? A great many of them, we know, were a thousand times worse.

“We work for them, like niggers under the lash, in their factories, in their mines, on their railroads. They make millions of dollars every year out of our labor, without ever once soiling

their white hands, or putting as much as a little finger to their own work.

“Fellow-citizens, we won’t stand it. We must have a fair division of the fruits of our labor. We must strike for our rights,” etc., etc.

It does not belong to my purpose to enter into the controversy between capital and labor, notwithstanding the deep interest I take in it; and therefore I say nothing about the arguments given here. But I should wish to ask this aggrieved individual what useful or practical purpose is served by his passionate language and his evident distress of mind. If none, then surely it is not wise to make himself unhappy over a grievance real, or fancied, which he does not hope to remedy.

We live, thank God, in a country of free institutions, where every man has a voice in the legislature and government. The will of the people, expressed by the majority, is the supreme civil law of the land; and if the people through their representatives see that communistic ideas of property are expedient to the community, those ideas will be very soon embodied in our statutes. But manifestly they do not see either the wisdom or the expediency of adopting those ideas; and

therefore the communist must consider himself in a minority and abide peacefully by its conditions.

It is, however, in the home that the discontented man makes himself most disagreeable. Nothing or nobody pleases him. He compares what he is with what he believes he ought to be, and the comparison drives him to the verge of madness. This state of mind renders him savage to every member of his household. He is surly and snappish with his wife; his children run into holes and corners from him; and his domestics either crouch before him in servile terror and lead a dog's life in his service, or, if they have courage to tell him that the terms of their agreement do not bind them to submit to insult, and that they won't submit to it, they get notice to leave.

All the peace and happiness of that home are spoiled by such a man. The children grow up unhealthy-minded, sour-tempered, unamiable to each other. They brood in secret over the cruelty to which they are subject; and they escape from it at the first opportunity, taking refuge anywhere—throwing themselves into the lowest pits

of social uncleanness rather than continue their detestable home-life.

The world, then, would be made much more pleasant and cheerful if all discontented people were picked out and taken off to some distant planet—Saturn, for instance—where they would have everything they could desire.

But another class would be still left behind, who, on a minor scale, try to make life as miserable as they can. These are *the grumblers*, who seem to look at life only through blue spectacles, so blue and dismal are their views of it. On a fine summer day, they sigh and fear it will rain. At a pleasant social gathering, they are as chilling and uncomfortable as the proverbial wet blanket. If you ask them about their health, they give you to understand that their end is only a matter of months, perhaps weeks ; they cannot live long ; death would be a relief ; there is at least rest in the grave.

“What a comfortable residence you have here, Mr. Growler !” a friend remarks to one of them.

“You think so,” Mr. Growler answers grimly ; “but you don’t know it. You see it faces north, and in winter we are frozen to death. Then, again, there is such rumbling and howling in the

chimneys, and the windows clatter in such a way whenever there is a breath of wind, that it is enough to drive one mad. But it's good enough for me. A man in my circumstances must not expect much comfort in life."

"But you have a nice, easy berth, Mr. Growler, in that insurance office, and you get a good income if I am not mistaken."

"So people say; so Mrs. Growler and the children tell me. I wish they knew all. Easy berth indeed! Why, would you ever think it? At my desk in the office, the blotting-pad has not been changed for the last month; the ink is so thick that I have to dip my pen in the stand for every half word; and in spite of all my representations, they won't supply us with any kind of tolerable pens to write with. Easy berth! Good salary—two hundred dollars a month! Nonsense!"

The most charitable view to take of a grumbler is to believe that he finds a melancholy enjoyment in representing himself as the most ill-used and miserable of men. But at the best he is a nuisance, and people shun all intercourse with him as much as possible. He attracts no new patrons to any concern in which he is engaged.

In most kinds of profession and business he is a decided failure. You therefore generally find him either out of employment, or just after getting in and going to resign. He is like the wandering Jew, always restless, always moving on: with this difference, however, that there is but one Wandering Jew (if there be even one), whereas the name of Grumbler is legion.

It will be seen from these remarks that much of the gloominess and misery of life is caused by ourselves. A little further consideration will show us, moreover, that a large amount of personal and social happiness may be secured by following a few simple rules, easy to be remembered and within every one's power to observe.

First, have an *honest, candid mind*, and let it look out and speak fearlessly in your eyes and face, as well as in your words. You will never make a true friend worth keeping if you be reserved and mysterious in your manner, or if you get a character for secrecy and duplicity. Betray no secret that you are bound in honor or duty to keep, but have as few others as possible. What we most look for in social life is candor and sincerity. This is the foundation of all pleasant intercourse among men; and without it,

sweetness of temper, polished address, and every other social quality go for little.

Next, *be unselfish*. Make your chief happiness consist in the pleasure you give to others, rather than in what you receive for yourself. It is the light the diamond gives out, not what it takes in, that determines its value. Don't think yourself the centre of the universe, as if everything were made for you and everything should point to you to do you homage. You will gain a vast amount of happiness for yourself, and confer still more on others, by doing them all the little kindnesses in your power. A word of excuse for some one in disgrace or misfortune, a gentle, good-humored reply to a rude remark, a visit of condolence, a present to a child, even a few cents to a good-for-nothing tramp—these are all small things, yet they scatter gleams of sunshine around us, and make some one happier than he would be otherwise.

The influence of a kind act never dies. It enters into our lives, increasing in us the power of good and lessening the hold of evil on us. It may be set aside for a time by other influences; but they cannot wholly destroy it. After long years of oblivion it comes back to us with the

same sweet attraction as when it first cast its spell over us; and if, even then, it produce no other effect, at least it makes us bless the name of the giver.

Such is the effect of one kind act, done in a moment, and scarcely done when forgotten. What, then, is the effect of a uniform series of such acts, repeated from day to day, and stretching through a lifetime? What an incalculable amount of good is done by them, what genuine happiness they cause us in the doing, what a glow of pure, unalloyed pleasure even the memory of them brings back to us, and what peace of soul and confidence in the future they will have in store for us at the supreme moment of life!

Another rule for rendering ourselves and those around us happy is *to make all possible allowance and excuse for the shortcomings and errors of others*. Without experience of it you cannot imagine the power that kindly construction of actions and motives has even on hardened natures. I do not undertake to speak here, however, of the reclamation of sinners, but of the social intercourse of friends.

Don't expect too much from those with whom

you live. Don't expect them to speak and act as you do ; to hold the same political and religious opinions ; to be as refined, as amiable, as well-informed as you are. Hold your own in argument, as in everything else, manfully ; but don't give way to ill-temper, don't descend to personalities, don't have recourse to ridicule. A French proverb says that "ridicule kills ;" that is, it destroys reputation or political prestige ; but very often it also destroys friendship. Triumph in a thousand arguments is not worth an hour's breach of friendship.

Every day we have frequent occasion to make allowances for the short temper or selfishness or unkindness of those around us. Let us force ourselves to make it in the interest of peace and good feeling, and we shall reap an ample reward in the many stanch friends we shall secure.


I have now only one other short rule to give. It is this : Always look to the *bright side of things*. It is in reality the only true side. If you are in trouble or difficulty, hope for the best ; and if the worst happen, hope still that the wheel of life which now submerges you will soon carry you into the light again. This hopefulness will

be a strong incentive to cheerful, persevering effort, which always succeeds.

The result of all these recommendations, faithfully carried out, will be a bright, kindly, cheerful character, beloved by every one, surrounded by friends and admirers, blest in the joy he will spread around him, in the unhappiness he will remove or lessen, in the saintly influence of his life, leading men heavenward.

CHAPTER VII.

LOVE OF HOME.

“RO aris et focis”—for our altars and homes, for Church and family—used to be a favorite battle-cry in olden times. It is so no longer. The idea of home is fast losing its hold on the imagination and affections. It is beginning to be considered old-fashioned, sentimental nonsense—some rubbish gotten entangled with the wheels of Progress and to be removed as quickly as possible.

Gold-worship has a great deal to do with this abandonment of the home idea. People think it does not “pay” to be attached to the home circle; and so they cut themselves adrift from it and break it up before their children are well out of the nursery. The State helps them to do this by the law of divorce; and they suffer no material inconvenience from doing it, because they can take to hotel-living.

Let us follow those homeless men and women

a little way and see what kind of lives they spend. They devote themselves heart and soul to money-making, perfectly indifferent to the means, provided they be the surest and swiftest. Honorable or shady, respectable or disreputable, it matters not which of these words qualify their conduct, if it succeed. And in truth, what inducement have they to keep faith and honor in their transactions? They have no friends to lose, no family name to discredit, if they be convicted of swindling or passing forged checks. There is no home to be wrecked; no children to be branded with their parent's disgrace; no wife or husband to hold them back by motives of respect, fidelity, or love. There are none of these inducements to keep them to a straightforward and honorable course, in which advancement is slow and plodding, and success is doubtful for persons of their ardent dispositions. Thus the breaking up of the home and the abandonment of the home idea open the way to the destruction of faith between man and man, to the injury of business, and to moral consequences on which I need not dwell.

But let them succeed to their hearts' utmost ambition, and to what do their lives amount? What is their wealth to them in their old age?

Can it buy them the gentle touch of a wife's or daughter's hand? What happiness, suited to their declining years, can it procure them in their hotel homes? waited on by porters who consider them a nuisance; shunned by the young as if they were lepers; tolerated on the premises only because they "pay"—purchasing for money the care and service (grudgingly given) that in their homes would have been bestowed gratis by devoted, loving hearts?

Home influences are the strongest human incentive I know to make life (whether social, professional, or political) pure and dignified. They are a powerful safeguard of personal character and honor; they help us to win the esteem and confidence of all good men, while they keep us from forfeiting our self-respect by unworthy or dishonorable conduct.

Love of home, therefore, merits a place among the means of getting on in life. But it does us still higher services than this. In the home, and only there, we learn the true dignity of woman. The home is her realm, where she reigns by love, the centre of gentle authority and of every refining influence. Outside its precincts, she looks to disadvantage. As mother, wife, or sister, dis-

charging her quiet duties with fidelity and tenderness, and often with self-sacrifice, she wins our admiration and respect, not for herself alone, but for all her sex. The age of chivalry is long ago past ; but perhaps in one of its noblest features, respect for woman, it may once more be revived where it was first born—in the Christian home. What sin and shame would this revival erase from our current history !

In every community, respect for law and order is the first requirement of a good citizen. Without it, the community will, sooner or later, go to pieces or be governed by brute force. For a nation that has shed its blood freely in the cause of popular government, this is a consideration of much importance. A prudent, far-seeing statesman will not be deceived by superficial professions of patriotism into the belief that the institutions of his country are permanent and unsailable. He looks, before all, to the people's conscientious respect for law and order, to the extent to which it prevails, and to the means of perpetuating it.

Now, among these means there is none so efficacious as the home. There the idea of authority is born and developed. Respect and

love grow up around it. The child learns in its first observations that its own will must not be its law and guide ; that there is above it a higher power to which it must submit. Grating as this experience must be to the young, they become soon reconciled to it, at first, perhaps, through necessity, but afterwards through perception of its wisdom and utility. In course of time they leave their homes and enter the wider family of society. Here again they find that they cannot do everything they wish to do ; for instance, they cannot annoy, or insult, or injure their neighbor. But they are prepared for those restrictions by their early home-training, and they have no difficulty in giving to the state the obedience and respect which they had previously given to their parents.

Allegiance of this kind is the only true stability of government, the only solid bulwark of national freedom ; and it is to be found only as an outcome of the Christian home. We may see, then, how unpatriotic and unwise is the tendency of modern legislation generally in tampering with the rights and ties of the family. Their object may or may not be, as churchmen represent it, jealousy of spiritual influence or interference ;

but their action is unquestionably calculated to produce the worst results for society. Protect the family, respect its rights, enlarge rather than curtail its privileges, and you need have no fear for the charter of your constitutional liberties.

Love of home has another result which deserves more than an indirect or passing allusion. It throws in our way a great deal of pure, innocent happiness, and thus makes us stronger and tougher for the serious struggles of life. Here is an illustration :

Mr. Walker is a travelling agent for the A. B. C. R. Co. To see him rushing about from place to place, now in the streets, now in the cars, now in a buggy, now on horseback, you would come to the conclusion that such intense restless activity could not possibly last long. And you would be justified in thinking so, were you not in the secret of the way in which he spends his Saturday afternoons and Sundays. Being off duty at these times, he retires into the blissful quiet of a cosy toy-like cottage in the suburbs, where his young wife and children are dying to welcome him home. There, after a few hours' rest, a bath, and a good meal, he amuses himself with the prattle and play of the little ones. Mrs. W.

tries to engage his attention to the housekeeping accounts for the past week. But he knows they are all right and gives her little heed. He does heed, however, when she goes to the piano and awakens in him healthy, if sweetly-sad, memories, by playing his favorite airs and singing his favorite songs.

So the afternoon passes; and in the evening the children's excitement is at white heat, for papa and mamma (themselves as happy as the children) are taking them to some place of public amusement. Sunday has its variety on the preceding day, of church-going and a delightful family drive into the country. Monday morning arrives; and Mr. Walker turns on steam again for another week, before the children are awake, and becomes once more, as he passes his thresh-old, the rushing, ubiquitous, invaluable agent of the A. B. C. R. Co.

This, it may be fairly hoped, is a type of many homes among us; and who will say that those who find their rest in them, after a hard day's or week's work, are not made better and happier by their quiet, cheerful influence? They are made more trustworthy, too; for, as I have said some pages back, they have a powerful inducement,

not felt by others, to keep steady and upright, in the fear of bringing sorrow and disgrace, and perhaps ruin, on those they love.

A home, however, to be loved, must be lovable ; and each of its members must contribute all in his power to make it so. I consider this a matter of so much importance that I shall give the remainder of this chapter to its consideration.

The Smiths, whom I visit occasionally, do not seem to me to have a very lovable home. The Misses Smith are so rude as to browbeat their mamma and wrangle among themselves, even before strangers. What they do or how far they go when by themselves, I can only conjecture ; but I know assuredly I should not like to be a father or a brother coming home of an evening from business to such scenes as I witness there sometimes. It is truly painful to see the unfortunate mother trying to hide her daughters' insults and bickerings. She is evidently a lady of refined, sensitive nature ; and I cannot understand how she has allowed her children to become such a torment to her.

A home like this of the Smiths is wanting in the first and most essential condition of happiness ; namely, unanimity or kindly feeling among

the members. Sometimes the wife domineers over the husband ; and the husband, in trying to assert his authority, causes disturbances that scare the children, or divide them into partisans of one or the other of their parents. The family is thus split into two hostile camps, and a kind of spitfire, cat-and-dog life is the result.

It would be unreasonable to expect any child to love such a home, or to show any attachment to it, except on religious grounds, of which I shall speak hereafter. Parents, then, who quarrel among themselves are scarcely in a position to complain of ingratitude or neglect if their grown up children abandon them as early as possible, and seek elsewhere the quiet they cannot enjoy at home.

There must be mutual forbearance and respect between the members of a home if it is to be made at all comfortable and attractive. Each must be prepared to give up his own will, at least in trifles, for the sake of peace and harmony. No one member should attempt to domineer over another, or force his views on him. Despotism is odious anywhere ; but most of all in the home.

I mentioned above the necessity of mutual respect. Brothers and sisters often fail to treat

each other in their homes (and sometimes elsewhere) with that courtesy they feel bound to show to mere acquaintances. It is said that familiarity breeds contempt; and it certainly seems to do so in this case. But in the home, as indeed in every other place, it should never lead to disregarding or hurting the feelings of our neighbor, particularly if that neighbor be a member of our own household. We imagine we can say what we like to those with whom we live. But we are very much mistaken. A thoughtless word, spoken by one who is very dear to us, is often felt more painfully than a blow. Many a young man has lost a valuable, helpful, devoted friend in the sister whom he slighted and repelled by his careless and offensive, although unintentional, indifference and neglect.

Not only between children, but also between them and parents, mutual respect should be always maintained. It is unnecessary to dwell here on the duties of the fourth commandment: "Honor thy father and thy mother." I take it for granted that any one who will read these pages will need no instruction on this head. But are there any duties of respect owing by parents

themselves to children? And if so, are they always fulfilled with conscientious care? Let us see.

The Jones girls are now grown-up young ladies. Nevertheless, they are as much kept down and have as little of their own way as if they were still in the nursery. Their father does not seem to have the slightest idea that they have any judgment or will of their own, much less that they have any right of exercising these faculties. They never have any pocket-money; never go out shopping; never attend parties; never pay visits; and, of course, in consequence never receive any. Yet Mr. Jones is wealthy, and will be able to give his children very handsome fortunes.

But he acts on the theory that children are all fools and untrustworthy until they get settled in life. Then they become suddenly transformed, by what process he does not pretend to say, into prudent, steady, experienced husbands and wives. They know how to manage money, although they never had laid out five dollars in their lives. They know all about housekeeping, although during their minority they had never been trusted with the keys of pantry or cellar.

All the propensities of youth are supposed to be dead in them, because those propensities had been kept beneath the surface and given no opportunity of development.

This is Mr. Jones's theory on "how to train up children in the way they should go;" and he winds up his exposition of it by this clinching argument:

"That's the way we ourselves were trained, and our fathers before us."

But with all due respect for Mr. Jones's time-honored theory, I would tell him that a way is not necessarily right because it is old; that experience is useless if it does not teach us to improve on the past; and that experience has undoubtedly proved his method of bringing up children not to be a wise or morally healthy method.


As a child grows in years it should grow in judgment, in self-reliance, in independence—in fact, in everything that should fit it to leave the parental home and form a home for itself. Now if a father and mother be wise, they will respect this moral growth of their children, and far from repressing, help it on by careful guidance and supervision.

I shall make but one other suggestion about the home. It should be kept as cheerful, as orderly, as refined as possible. It should be surrounded with every beauty and attraction that taste can devise or prudent management afford. Works of art, pictures, books, music, furniture, should all harmonize, and reflect to the visitor, as only the arrangement of a home can reflect, the character of the family.

Expensiveness, of course, would be out of place in the homes of the poor. But even the poorest homes may be made pleasant and attractive by scrupulous cleanliness and orderly arrangement, by a bright hearth and a genial, kindly welcome.

CHAPTER VIII.

RECREATION.

“HAT a dry, matter-of-fact character that Robinson is ! He has no more humor in him than a telegraph-pole.”

Words like these, which we sometimes hear, express the aversion of the world to a large class of well-meaning, useful, business people. They are those who believe and deal only in the hard facts of life. They reduce everything to the category of facts, and deal with it accordingly. Music, poetry, fiction, emotion and sentiment of all kinds, not being facts in their sense of the word, are set aside as childish nonsense. They look askant even at speculative science, although grounded in fact, because it has no practical work-a-day purpose in it. Indeed this word “practical,” with others like it—“business-like,” “utilitarian,” “economic,”—is the commonest on their tongues ; while “pleas-

ant," "bright," "social," "amiable," are qualifications never used by them except with a contemptuous sneer.

Men of Robinson's stamp may generally be recognized at once by their appearance. They have a fixed look in their small, sharp eyes. Their lips are thin and hard-set with a fixed, unbending purpose. They are wrinkled and shrivelled almost to emaciation, like apples fallen before they had become ripe, and dried in the sun.

Another apparently opposite class of men approach very near to the Robinson type, although revered by the world (unless they be poor), and spoken of with admiration mixed with a certain amount of awe. They are those who bury their lives in books and get the reputation of being profoundly learned. They never join in the social world around them. They do not know how to take part in ordinary conversation. They are consulted as encyclopædias or calf-bound editions of the classics, but you would no more ask them to an evening party or a friendly gathering than you would one of those venerable folios themselves. They live out of the current age, either before it or behind it according to their line of study, and are as innocent as chil-

dren (more innocent than some) of the ways and doings of the world.

I should not refer to these worthy and inoffensive, but unattractive, men, were it not to call special attention to a prevalent mistake underlying our whole educational system. We cultivate in our schools and colleges the intellect and the memory to the highest degree, and we call the process education. But the will, which is the highest faculty of the soul (if not the soul itself in action), is left to its own resources for development. The consequence is that an educated (?) man with a university brand on him may be a very immoral man, and may ride rough-shod over all the laws of social life, and yet be admired and lionized, and after death have a lamp kept perpetually burning before his niche in the temple of Fame. Meanwhile an ordinary citizen, honest in his dealings, amiable in his social relations, blameless in his conduct, is left undistinguished and unadmired, and has a commonplace slab put over his grave.

The higher ideal of common life, to my mind, consists in what we call in every-day parlance "a good all-round man;" one whose will has been cultivated with the same care as his intellect and

memory ; whose eye has been taught to discern the beautiful in nature and art ; whose ear has been trained to appreciate the soul-thrilling power of music ; whose voice and touch, sinew and muscle, carriage and address, have all been developed under the care of skilled, practical teachers.

I know that worship of intellect produces some good results. It enriches the world's stock of knowledge, and it is an incentive to the perfect development of one part of our nature. But such development, without any correspondent growth of the other parts, seems to me to turn out a very disproportioned, unæsthetic figure, reminding me of a puny dwarf with a huge head, but no other members to speak of.

In some parts of Italy they tie down a certain domestic biped by the wings, and feed it on a particular regimen until the liver gets abnormally enlarged. It is then killed, the flesh thrown aside, and the enlarged organ sold for the table at a very remunerative price. Is not something analogous done, outside Italy, in the most advanced systems of mental culture ?

“What has all this to do with recreation ?” you will naturally ask. Not a great deal, I admit,

but something. I took Mr. Robinson's case, at the beginning of this chapter, to represent those who do not believe in recreation or in any social enjoyment whatever. The other case was a parallel one. Now, do such men gain by their absorption in one life-long pursuit to the exclusion of all relaxation or amusement? Can their mental faculties bear the constant uniform strain put on them without becoming impaired? Can their physical health be as vigorous and enduring as it would be if they took regular exercise and enjoyed their holidays when they came round?

Experience answers "No" to each of these questions. Action and rest, labor and recreation, must alternate in our lives, if we wish to put them to the farthest and the best use, and to make them tolerably pleasant. There are few, I believe, who gainsay this truth in theory; but there are also few who take recreation in the precise measure in which it should be taken, and of the exact kind best suited to their occupations.

Idle people would make all life a perpetual holiday, if they could afford to do so. They take no interest in their work. It is a galling drag on them, a disagreeable necessity to which

they never become reconciled. They go to business in the morning as if they were going to execution. They dawdle away all the time they can before they begin work. They take every possible opportunity of their employer's absence to stand idle and keep others idle during the day. They brighten somewhat in the afternoon as closing time approaches. And when the clock strikes the welcome hour, how briskly they throw aside pen or plane or hammer, with their office coat or working-jacket!

Then alone their day seems really to begin. Supper, beer, billiards, theatres, gambling-table—these engross their attention far into the night, when they retire to sleep off, not the weariness of the day, but the effects of their evening's pleasure-making.

Such a life as this comes, after a time, to have no pleasure, even in the amusements to which it is devoted. There is an uneasy consciousness in it that those amusements are not quite justified by the amount of work done; that they are too *fast*; that they involve neglect or violation of home duties or of social obligations, if not of higher laws. Inevitable reaction sets in, bringing with it a conflict between habit, fear of ridicule,

and human respect on the one hand, and a sense of duty on the other. Unfortunately the latter is frequently, if not generally, defeated, and the issue is a deeper plunge into crooked ways.

Recreation, then, should never be made the primary object of life. The thought of it should be kept aloof, as far as possible, during business hours. No one should give the bulk of his time to it, or, of course, neglect work on its account. As I mentioned above, to have any real enjoyment in recreation, one must feel that it is justifiable, and that he has earned the right to take it. With these conditions and others to be mentioned, it gives zest to the most toilsome labor, refreshes the whole being, braces the energies, invigorates the exhausted brain, strengthens the wearied arm. Life, too, is brightened and cheered by it, and saved from becoming a slavish, monotonous drudgery.

You must not think that recreation necessarily implies cessation of work or unprofitable occupation of time. It is quite compatible with useful employment, provided the same energies be not engaged in it as had been engaged in regular work. Hence a person doing manual work during the day may take his recreation by spending

some hours in mental culture every evening. On the other hand, a physician, lawyer, or clerk—any one, in fact, engaged in-doors, or in head-work, should make his recreation consist in some out-door, bodily exercise, all the better if it be the cultivation of a flower or vegetable garden, or some open-air employment equally useful. The rule to follow is: relieve the mind by corporal, and the body by mental, work.

I have known some earnest, hard-working men to break down through neglect of this rule. After a day's heavy strain on the mind, they sat two or three hours after supper over the chess-board or at the whist-table. These games, in which they joined solely for recreation, in reality continued the exercise of the same mental powers as had been wearied to exhaustion during the day. As far as any useful rest was concerned, they might have continued in their office all evening. But Nature always avenges herself for any abuse of her powers. Those men were compelled to give up temporarily mental work of all kinds; whereas, had they husbanded their resources by judicious recreation, there would have been no occasion for enforced seclusion from their desks.

I referred some pages back to a taste for read-

ing as an indication of a healthy tone of mind. I think it useful to refer to the same subject here, as a means of delightful and profitable recreation.

Would it not be very pleasant to live among refined, social, and intelligent neighbors who would drop in of an evening when you had come from work and supped, and would stay chatting or conversing with you just as long as you wished?

One would tell you all the news of the day—murders, railroad accidents, prices of stocks and shares, doings and misdoings of the political and social world, etc., etc. Another, being a charming story-teller, would create an ideal world around you, and people it with interesting characters in the most delightfully unreal situations. Another, again, would tell you what great minds and strong hearts and hands had achieved in the past, and of what you yourself are capable, if you only aspire and labor to become like them. A fourth visitor, more solemn than the others, but more fascinating too, when you had come to know him well, would speak to you of your origin, your destiny, your accountability to an invisible Power for everything you did and for every moment of your life.

Had you neighbors like these, would you not experience much embarrassment in deciding to which of them you should listen in preference to the others? And would it not increase your embarrassment considerably to know that they were exceedingly jealous of each other, so that if you expressed a decided preference for any one of them all the others would retire?

Probably after having made many mistakes in your partiality for one or another of these neighbors, you would find it prudent to come to some such compromise as the following. You would arrange with visitor number one to tell you the news of the day in ten or fifteen minutes, and then to leave, as you did not care for more gossip. With number two, the story-teller, you would have an understanding that he was to come only when he had something particularly good to tell, or when you had a headache, and wished for something light. The man of history and biography, number three, would be invited to attend regularly every evening and stay until near bed-time, when he would give place to number four, whose conversation, though brief, would have a special place in your thoughts before you went to sleep. He might also be asked to pay

you a morning visit, and suggest some thoughts in his line to remember through the day.

Now, you will have seen that this case is an allegoric one. The four neighbors are the four classes of reading-matter which people usually have at their disposal every evening when they return from work. They are the newspaper, the novel, the history or biography, and the religious book. The newspaper may be read with advantage for ten or fifteen minutes—not longer. The novel should be taken up only on the occasions suggested above. History and biography ought to get the bulk of our free time, and the religious book, on account of the stupendous issues of which it treats, should always have at least five minutes given to it morning and evening.

Many, I know, will be loath to give up novel-reading for history and biography. The novel has become as necessary to them as their dinner, or his pipe or cigar to the inveterate smoker. They see no harm in a novel. It raises them out of their dreary, matter-of-fact surroundings; makes them companions of refined people; shows them how those people dress, speak, and act. It gives beautiful sketches of scenery; describes thrilling events as if one beheld them; punishes


vice and rewards virtue, etc., etc.—No ; they will not, they cannot, give up their novel.

In reply to this passionate pleading for the novel, I say : Keep your novel, by all means, provided it does not interfere with your work and is not calculated to do you spiritual injury. If you prefer to read a novel during your free time instead of a more directly useful book, you have a perfect right to do so, as a means of refreshing your mind after the weariness and exhaustion of your day's work. But remember this : Some novels, without a particle more interest than others, will unfit you for all work. They will make you discontented with your position ; they will lead you to assume ridiculous airs ; they will fill your imagination with silly, unreal pictures of life. Avoid all such stories, if you have any honest intention of getting on in the world.

I do not speak here of novels that make open profession of immorality. *Their* inevitable end is social ruin for their readers.

CHAPTER IX.

CONTROL THE PASSIONS.

F you look for the word Passion in an ordinary dictionary, you will find it defined, "That which is suffered ; any strong emotion." Perhaps you may not have a clear idea of what emotion means ; so you look for it also, and are told that it is "Excitement of the feelings ; agitation." These definitions leave you very nearly where you were, as far as the word Passion is concerned. Let us, then, see whether we can get any more distinct notion of it from our own reflections.

There are in man two natures, the spiritual, which we call the soul, and the material, or the body. The former not only gives life and development to the latter, but feels all its wants as if they were its own, and provides for them. Hence the soul has two distinct offices to fulfil : it has to provide for its own well-being and preservation, and for the well-being and preservation

of the body. We are concerned here only with this second office.

Acting through the senses, the soul sees some object necessary, useful, or agreeable to the body, the sight of which produces the passion we call love. If the object be actually possessed, it produces joy or pleasure ; if not possessed, desire, longing, or despair. On the other hand, the sight of a disagreeable or obnoxious object causes hatred or disgust ; its possession causes sadness, and its looming in the future, fear.

Sometimes a desirable object is far removed from us and difficult of approach, or it is away in the future, and we can gain it only by patient work and waiting. In either case, the soul is moved by ambition to undergo ceaseless effort and fatigue for the possession of such object. Finally, if the body be attacked or injured by any external cause, the soul is roused by anger to resent and repel the attack or injury.

Now, all these movements of the soul on behalf of the body, for its well-being, gratification, or defense, are called passions. You will see, then, that the passions are by no means the wicked things that some people would make them out to be. On the contrary, without them,

or some higher law to replace them, human life would very soon come to an end. Imagine a man loving nothing, shunning nothing, desiring nothing; therefore indifferent to everything—cold, hunger, thirst, etc. Having no ambition, he is never moved to any difficult or noble work. Devoid of anger, he is knocked about, like a ball, from hand to hand and foot to foot. It is unnecessary to say that such a man could not live, and that if the world were made up of beings like him it would come to an end in a single generation.

The passions, therefore, are intended by the wise and beneficent providence of our Creator to bring human life to its natural perfection and to preserve the human race from extinction. If the soul confined them to this object, the world would be very much changed for the better, and the golden days of the first paradise would probably return to earth. But, unfortunately, the soul forgets or puts aside its own special interests for the passing pleasure it receives from the abuse of the passions. To understand how this happens, you must know that every passion is accompanied by a certain sensible pleasure. Now the soul, with an unbounded capacity and longing for

happiness, seizes on the pleasure it finds in the exercise of passions as a substitute for that happiness, and wrings them to exhaustion in its insatiable thirst.

In this way the passions come to be like restless, ungovernable steeds that bear their riders where they will—generally to destruction. Self-love, left unchecked, leads to pride and contempt of others ; love of the beautiful, to lust and all its kindred filthiness. Love of the necessities and comforts of life grows into envy or covetousness towards our neighbor, if he possess them in greater abundance than ourselves ; or they grow into gluttony and intemperance, if we set our minds immoderately on procuring them. The sense of justice that would repel injury becomes uncontrolled anger and revenge, while our natural tendency to rest after labor develops into slothful neglect of duty.

It rarely happens, however, that any one has a tendency to indulge all his passions to excess. There is usually but one that is so indulged, and it is called the predominant or ruling passion. This fact simplifies very much the warfare you are bound to wage on the irregular inclinations of your lower nature. Keep your ruling passion

in check, and the others will cause you little trouble.

I imagine here I see a reader, when he comes to this last sentence, turning the open book downwards, crossing his arms, and inquiring of himself: "What is my ruling passion?"

"Pride?" he soliloquizes. "No; I am not a bit proud. Covetousness or envy? I wish every one as rich and happy as he can desire. I am sure my ruling passion is neither of these. Sensuality of any kind? No; I scarcely think so. I certainly enjoy a good dinner, and I take my beer and wine in moderation, very seldom to excess. It cannot be sensuality. Anger? Perhaps; let me see. I know I am somewhat hasty and hot-tempered; but then I cool down almost immediately, and feel on tenter-hooks until I make up with the person who provoked me. On the whole, I don't believe it is anger. Well now, can it be sloth, I wonder? I certainly feel heavy and slothful in the morning when I have to rise; but I don't idle my time at work, at least not much; and I am not often late. Really, I cannot say that I am particularly given to sloth. Perhaps I have no ruling passion. Let us hear what the mistress has to say about it."

"Mary," he says aloud to his wife, who is sewing at another corner of the table where he is reading, "Mary, I want your opinion on something this book says about the ruling passion. You know what a person's ruling passion is, I dare say."

"Yes, James ; I think I do."

"Of course you do. Well, this book says: 'Keep your ruling passion in check, and the others will cause you little trouble.' Now, what I want to know is, can you tell me what is my ruling passion? I have been thinking the matter over and over in my own mind ; and I really do not see that I have any ruling passion at all. I am not proud, to begin with."

"O James !"

"Why, you don't mean to say that I am proud, do you ?"

"Really, James, as you ask me, I cannot help telling you that you are not only proud, but excessively vain. You know how particular you are about your cuffs and collars, and how many pairs of gloves you have in the drawer of your dressing-table, quite fresh and new, but for being ever so little gone in the fingertips. You know, too, how fidgety you were until you got that

gold watch and chain, although you have not quite paid for them yet. Then again, when the Browns asked us last week to their party, you remember how enraged you were at what you termed their cheek, calling them impudent upstarts, because Mr. Brown had made his way from being a poor errand-boy to be a respectable store-keeper."

"All right, Mary. Granted that I am proud, perhaps I am a drunkard too?"

"Not quite a drunkard, James dear; but I hope you won't mind my telling you that you take a great deal too much wine and beer. You must admit that whenever you do not come home direct from business you always return muddled and cross-grained, and talking such nonsense."

"Go ahead, Mary; say I am a drunkard outright, and have done with it. Now, what about anger? Am I a surly, ill-tempered brute, knocking you and the servants about, and making the home a kind of pandemonium every time I come into it? Don't think of my feelings. You are quite welcome to say whatever you have in your mind. I am prepared for anything."

"Now, James, I see you are getting angry ; so perhaps I had better go no farther."

"Not at all, Mary. You are examining my conscience for me, and I am sure I ought to feel infinitely obliged to you. What about anger, now?"

"Do you see the point of this needle, James? You have not as much patience as would lie comfortably on the point of this needle. The smallest thing puts you out. Only to-day at dinner you got into a passion, and told me to dismiss the cook, because the beef was a little overdone. Last week you flung the boot-jack downstairs after the poor servant-boy, because he had not polished your shoes to your liking. You have been losing your temper and threatening law proceedings every day for the last two years against our next-door neighbor, because he has been learning to play the clarionet without an ear for music. No, James ; whatever you think of yourself, don't imagine you are free from anger, because you are not."

"That will do, Mary. You have got me three ruling passions, when I thought I had not one. Three are enough at present, thank you. If I want more, I'll refer to you."

This imaginary conversation illustrates how much more clearly others see our characteristic failings than we ourselves see them. Hence arises the difficulty in many cases of deciding what is our predominant passion. It may lie dormant, and apparently dead, in us for years, because we are cut off from the opportunity of indulging it. Nay, more ; it may not infrequently be the very trait of our character on which we most pride ourselves, deceived, no doubt, by the gorgeous colors in which it loves to clothe itself.

Let us now consider the effect of a ruling passion on a business or professional life. Whether you be in the employment of the public or of an individual, you are required, as a first condition of giving satisfaction or of attaining success, to give your whole attention to your work. This is the case no matter what your position be, whether you are a lawyer, living on men's passion for litigation ; or a physician, depending on the chance cases of illness in your neighborhood ; or a clerk in a store managed personally by its owner. Now, a ruling passion, by its very nature, is closer to you in interest, occupies more of your thoughts, has more potent influence over you

than any profession or business in which you may be engaged. You think, perhaps, it can be dismissed on entering your office in the morning, and kept waiting for you round the corner until you leave in the afternoon. But you are very much mistaken. It returns at frequent intervals during the day, as if to make sure of its victim and to show its despotic power. Your thoughts are occupied by it, consciously or unconsciously, much more than you think.

It is a dishonest, unamiable, unpleasant life you thus try to lead, dividing your time between two masters, one of whom has contracted and paid for it all. In his estimation you are losing ground more and more every day. Nearer and nearer a crisis is fast approaching, when you will find yourself cast adrift, and left dependent on your ruling passion for the necessities of life.

As to your self-respect, only you yourself can know how low you are sinking in it. When you began life, you set a high and beautiful ideal before you. You intended to push your way upwards to that ideal by honest work, by fidelity to trust, by mastery of your business. You resolved to allow no self-indulgence, no side-issues to entice you from your straight, upward course. How

have you kept your resolution? What has become of your ideal? In what does your life promise to end?

This last is a most important and useful question for any one under the influence of a ruling passion to ask himself. "In what will this life I am now leading end? Can I always keep up appearances—always steer a middle course?" Probably, if you be a young man, you will rely on your consciousness of moral or physical strength and answer, "Yes." But look into the few pages of life your experience has hitherto enabled you to read, and say can you find one drunkard who reached fifty with a creditable business character? Can you find one habitual gambler who had not brought ruin and probably disgrace on himself and his family before he had reached that age? Can you find one young man who, beginning at twenty to pilfer from his employer—in bank, or store, or workshop, it matters not,—was not to be found at forty in the penitentiary, or, at best, hiding from justice in the slums of some foreign city? Do not deceive yourself by the belief that an indulged passion will ever amble through life with you at an easy,

jog-trot pace. Its way is down-hill, and its speed becomes more and more rapid as it goes.

If you find, then, any passion gaining a hold on you and coming between you and your work, break with it without delay and with strong, resolute will. It will probably cause you a sharp twinge of pain to do so ; but the pain will be rewarded by the intense relief that will follow. Keep also from the places where it would be likely to tempt you, and from all companions already under its influence.

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CHAPTER X.

TEMPERANCE.



THE word Temperance is nowadays popularly applied to the moderate or rational use of intoxicating drink. It is in this sense I intend to speak of it in the present chapter.

Some people hold that all intoxicating drink is poison, and therefore should be used only as we use arsenic or chloroform—in case of disease and by medical advice. Others seem to go even further, regarding it as something intrinsically bad, as if it were a pure invention and creation of the powers of darkness. This latter opinion is so foolish and extravagant that I need not delay to point out its impiety.

The advocates of the former opinion would exclude all wine, beer, and spirits from our cellars and tables. They would shut up saloons and refreshment bars, pull down breweries and distilleries, and root out the very thought of drink

from the popular mind. They have no faith in moderate drinking, holding that it is an unnecessary, self-indulgent, senseless habit, and that it always ends in excess.

Neither public opinion nor the common-sense of mankind favors this view. It is opposed to the highest and holiest examples of moral goodness recorded in history. It is an implied insult to a vast number of living men of pure, blameless character. It is an unwarranted interference with the personal liberty of our neighbor—a stupid yoke to which a noisy minority would subject him. I am aware, indeed, that some excellent, unselfish men hold it and do their utmost to propagate it. But from what I know of them, they aim at local, not universal, reformation. Their work, moreover, is confined to large cities and among the poor, who at every turn are met by inducements to drink, and who are drawn to intemperance by poverty, heredity, or inveterate habit—frequently by all three together. For such, beyond all doubt, the safest and most prudent course lies in total abstinence.

Outside this local and exceptional work, I venture to say, the cause of Temperance is injured rather than served by our extreme drink-reform-

ers. Their declamatory arguments fail to prove their assertions, and they bring discredit on those who would adopt gentler methods to prevent excessive drinking.

It is the abuse of a thing, not its use—the drinker, not the drink,—that should be assailed. Classify men according to their drinking habits, opportunities, or natural propensities. Say to one class: “I exclude you altogether from any remarks I am about to make.” To another: “You are safe yet; but you stand on dangerous, slippery ground. Be very careful.” To a third: “I have but one advice to give you: abstain from drink altogether.” The moderation and good sense of this course would, I believe, go a long way to reconcile and convert those who now laugh and make faces at water-drinkers.

If you find by experience that the taste of intoxicating drink creates in you such a craving for it as seemingly to overpower your reason and will and drag you headlong to excess—then you should never touch drink. Total abstinence is your only salvation. This is a hard yoke, but it is absolutely necessary; and if you throw it off the consequences will certainly prove fatal. Each of your orgies will leave your will weaker

to resist temptation than the preceding one. It will also make your physical recovery slower and more difficult. Thus the habit of drink will be growing stronger and more despotic, as your physical strength will be declining. At last, and much sooner than you had ever anticipated, the overstrained thread of life will snap; and a day whose morning was full of bright promise will end in darkness and mournful disappointment.

“Dear me!” some one remarks to his next neighbor, as they stand by the drunkard’s grave, while the sexton is shovelling down the heavy clay on the coffin—“Dear me! who would have ever thought some years ago that poor George would come to this sad end! The best-hearted fellow that ever lived; he was nobody’s enemy but his own.”

“He made a bad fight of it,” the neighbor remarks. “He was quite young, was he not?”

“Only forty-two. Young enough; but the wonder is he ever lived to be so old. He had abundance of warnings, poor George had, if he had had the sense to take them. It was only a year ago he was at death’s door, after a former drinking-fit. I was told, at the time, that the doctor cautioned him the next would be his last. He was

thoroughly frightened, I can assure you. I remember his telling a few of us, not more than a month since, in his own house, that he would never touch drink again. Yet it was not a week afterwards when he began, and this is the end!"

"Has he left his family provided for, do you know?"

"He has left them beggars—absolute beggars. I am informed his creditors will not get ten per cent of their money when everything is sold. Under heaven, I don't know what his wife and her four helpless children will do for a living."

"It is very sad!"

"Sad! Why, I can tell you, it is enough to make even a steady, sober man tremble when he puts a glass of beer to his lips. When poor George began life he was as careful about drink as any one could be."

"I suppose the habit of drink becomes a disease—I mean a physical disease—after a time."

"I should rather say it becomes a real, down-right madness. But, disease or madness, it comes very much to the same thing. A man knows whither he is drifting, and the kind of bed he is preparing for himself. If he do not pull up in

time he has only himself to blame for the consequences."

Young men are frequently placed in circumstances in which they require heroic determination and control of will to resist the temptation to drink. Here is an illustration :

Young Johnson, after completing creditably a five years' college course, is sent to business in a large city. Before and after office-hours he is his own master,—can go where he pleases, do what he pleases, choose what companions he pleases. His free time hangs heavily on his hands, and he knows not what to do with it. After some evenings spent in moping and yawning, he is very glad to accept the unmistakable advances towards companionship made by Thompson, who belongs to the same house of business, and seems to know every one and everything about town.

Thompson takes him to the theatre, introduces him to some choice companions, twits him good-naturedly on his greenness, and makes him heartily ashamed of it. A few more evenings pass, and Johnson has come to look up to his companion, or, rather, to bow down before him in hero-worship, as the pink of fashion and the beau ideal of a gentleman. He begins to practise be-

fore his glass the beau ideal's easy, graceful—some would call it swaggering—manner ; orders a new suit of clothes after the fashion of the beau ideal's ; purchases a hat of the same pattern ; trims his mustache and whiskers to the same shape ; and, altogether, bids fair to become a very successful caricature of the beau ideal, who does not know whether to be flattered or disgusted by the imitation.

But a momentous crisis is come in Johnson's life. One night he is elected a member of the "Out-and-Outers," the beau ideal's aristocratic club. He has to give a champagne supper, and he gives it. He drinks freely, as does every one else there ; but the others are used to do so, and they keep their heads, if not their feet. He loses both. He tries to get up, with the intention of making a speech ; but the room spins round him and he spins with it, knocking down all the glasses and decanters in his neighborhood. They dâsh some water on him, and when they find him somewhat conscious they pack him into a cab and send him home.

The next few days are given up to repentance and a racking headache. The beau ideal is too wary to intrude himself, and bides his time.

His manner even becomes cold and distant, caused, Johnson fears, by his own disgraceful conduct at the club. He (Johnson) makes timid advances towards reconciliation. They are cordially responded to, and another night at the "Out-and-Outers" is the result. Other nights follow in quick succession. Johnson shakes off his greenness much sooner than might have been expected, and before many months outstrips his beau ideal and other boon companions in fast living and hard drinking.

Now suppose, after some months' dissipation, Johnson's better nature, backed by his home-training and college refinement, begins to revolt against being dragged in the mire of his present dissolute club-life. He remembers remorsefully that he came to town with a higher purpose than to sink into a fashionable, drunken sot. How will he break with the "Out-and-Outers"? How will he cast off the influence of the beau ideal? How will he bear the ridicule of his office-companions when they will have heard of his turning puritanical or monastic in his habits? Moreover, what amusement or recreation will fill up the evenings hitherto spent in gayety and pleasure,

which even now have not lost all their fascination over him?

It is here that Johnson's strength of character is most severely tested. Here whatever grit or stamina he may have in him comes out. This is the turning-point in his life. I do not say that he is bound to run to the nearest church and pledge himself to total abstinence. But he certainly *is* bound to cut off all connection with his present companions, and to adopt some more worthy model than the aristocratic Thompson. Furthermore, he must find some healthy occupation for his free time—some light, useful work in which he can take a pleasurable interest.

Large cities supply abundant opportunities for finding such work; and any clergyman will gladly point them out to a young man who has the good sense to consult him on the matter. I may remark here, that parents or guardians do not consult as carefully as they ought for the moral protection of children whom they send to business if they do not place them in the charge of the clergyman of the district where they are employed.

Weak-minded people who are easily impressed and influenced by others should either not drink

at all, or should have a fixed, cast-iron rule not to drink beyond a certain moderate quantity. Their only safeguard against intemperance consists in their holding fast to one or other of these principles. In fact, for such persons method and order in everything is absolutely essential to make up for their natural deficiency in will-power.

One of them, for instance, attends a dinner-party at which the vulgar habit of pressing drink on the guests is retained. The weak-minded man, who is also shy and retiring, shrinks from making himself remarkable. He would prefer to make any sacrifice than to be singled out and have all eyes fixed on him by refusing to "help himself and pass the decanter." What will he do? He will certainly "help" himself as often as he is urged, if he have no fixed principle to guide him. He will drink more than is good for him, not only at that but other parties; and he will become a confirmed drunkard much sooner than many around him if he do not set his foot down at the outstart, and say: "Thus far, and no farther."

You may ask, How is a weak-minded man capable of this strong determination? I reply that an earnest, well-defined resolution is often

a greater help and safeguard to such a man than the sternest habit of self-control would be to another. We are apt to overestimate and over-tax the strength which we know we possess ; whereas we are on our guard against the weak points of our character, and stand firmly behind the resolutions with which we prop them up.

Looking back on a varied experience of family life, I cannot find a single instance of a drunkard living in a pleasant, well-regulated home. The character of such a place is too cheerful, its tone too refined for him. There may be a hand-to-hand conflict for a time : he may try his utmost to destroy the home ; and the home may try its utmost to reform him. But the one or the other gives in after a little.

Hence the blessing of a prudent, resolute, loving wife or mother to a home. She will not scold ; she will not waste her life in tears ; she will not sit down in despair and let everything go amiss. She will simply assert her authority and maintain it. She is queen over her household ; then the household must be regulated according to her will. If she considers drink advisable, either regularly at the afternoon meals or on Sundays and festive occasions, she is too prudent

to forbid or overstimulate it. But there must be no stealthy or irregular indulgence in it; no "coming home muddled" at night; no necessity for soda-water in the morning.

Perhaps you think this a gross exaggeration of the influence of woman over the household. Perhaps you call to mind such or such a home of some of your acquaintances, in which the lady of the house tries her best to keep her husband temperate, and fails. I, too, know abundance of such homes; but there is not one of them in which the lady is not to blame. Either she allowed her power to slip through her fingers early in her married life; or she makes her home detestable by alternate scolding and crying; or there is no true womanly love in her efforts at reformation.

CHAPTER XI.

GAMBLING, ETC.



HE gambler aims at making a short cut to wealth. The beaten, zigzag, uphill way is tedious and disgusting to him ; so he dashes out of it into the thicket, hoping to emerge after a little on a height far above the companions he had abandoned. In other words, he invests his capital on a doubtful venture, with a possibility, indeed, of winning a fortune, but a much greater possibility of losing his investment. While the issue is undecided he lives in a state of unhealthy excitement, at one moment building magnificent air-castles, at another leaning over the yawning precipice of despair, and looking down into its dark, fathomless depths. He pays no attention to his ordinary business, shuts out all the pleasant influences of home and friends, and goes about gloomy and taciturn, wrapped up in his feverish speculations.

At last the issue on which he had staked his

money is declared, and he has—lost. The blow falls heavily on him; but he must keep up appearances. He must limit his family expenditure; he must borrow money; he must retrieve his lost capital by another venture. “Fortune favors the brave.” “When things are at the worst, they mend.” “There is a tide in the affairs of men,” etc. So he buoys himself up, and prepares for another plunge at the first opportunity.

It is not necessary to follow the gambler through the various stages of his career. He may perhaps stave off the day of exposure and ruin by some successful ventures; but the day comes inevitably, sooner or later. He loses his employment; his home is broken up; his wife and children become pensioners on the charity of his friends; and he himself, if he have escaped prison, must begin life in some strange place, without character, without nerve or energy, without a single gleam of hope brightening the dreary prospect before him. Drink often, suicide occasionally, ends such a career.

Few young people in business would ever let the idea of theft come near them, much less yield to the temptation of it, had they not contracted a passion for gambling or drink during their

school-days. Often in a secluded spot on the play-ground, or in a stolen visit to the saloon, the practical benefit of the class-room and the prayer-hall is destroyed by the pack of cards or the brandy-flask. The stakes are, no doubt, small, and the amusement seems quite harmless; but the excitement of suspense, the love of unearned gain, the triumph of success—these are as easily fed on cents as on dollars, and they go on growing in the young soul until they blight and kill its fine moral culture. No one can win in games of chance without entailing loss on others; and no one can triumph in his own success without triumphing in their discomfiture.

A splendid opportunity presents itself of winning a fabulous sum of money by risking a few dollars. Full-page advertisements of "the unheard-of offer" stare at you from the morning papers. Even though you be a shrewd, steady business man, you may be strongly tempted to "try your luck," because every one around you is trying his, and the investment is a mere trifle, and in popular crazes even common-sense people often lose their heads. If you can spare the money, and if you injure no one depending on you by throwing it away, I cannot tell you that

your investment in a ticket is morally wrong, although it probably is unwise and imprudent. But many young people cannot spare the money ; and yet they have the same craving to secure the prize as those who can. They are in the employment of others, and during the week have the handling of all the cash connected with their department. Let us see how they contrive to purchase a ticket.

Suppose Perkins to be one of these young people. He is fresh from college, where he was noted for his gambling propensities ; and he is now in a position of trust, with full charge of the cash-box. He sees one morning the lottery advertisement ; he hears every one talking about it ; and allows his imagination to run away with the coveted prize and build castles with it in fairy-land. He must not let slip the chance of winning it. But he has no money of his own—will have none until the end of the week. What a misfortune ! Yet, can he not take the few dollars required for the purpose from the office ? No one will be the wiser ; he can replace it on settling-day ; it is perfectly honest. Yes ; he will do it.

And he takes the money from the office, and invests it in a ticket.

Possibly the first time he does so he escapes detection. He replaces the amount *borrowed*, and therefore thinks all is right. Another similar occasion comes around, and he takes a larger amount with little or no qualm of conscience. Time passes, and he drifts into the habit of providing himself every evening with pocket-money out of the office cash-box. At last a report reaches the ears of his employer that he (Perkins) spends his evenings at the gambling-table, and seems rather more flush of cash than a clerk in his position can be expected to be.

Next morning there is an investigation, resulting in the unfortunate young man's summary dismissal, with a stain on his character that time, or faithful service, or even tears of repentance, will never be able to efface from the eyes of men.

I know Perkins' offence will be considered trivial compared to the offence of many young men who abscond from their employers and from justice, leaving a vile record of dishonesty behind them. But even his case shows the effect of a gambling habit, fostered at home or in col-

lege, on the career of one otherwise fitted to succeed in business.

You may, perhaps, be inclined to infer that gambling in every form is immoral, because it so frequently leads to excess and wrong-doing. But this is not so. By itself gambling cannot be condemned as unlawful, unless undue advantage be taken by one or more of the parties engaged in it of the ignorance of the others. Nowadays a large portion of the capital of every country is invested in speculations which depend as much on chance for their success as a game of cards or a throw of the dice-box. Fortunes are thus made or lost, and homes are converted into palaces or reduced to hovels, with a suddenness unknown to our forefathers.

I do not say that those speculations are wrong; but I doubt very much if the sum of human happiness be increased by them. The insatiate craving for wealth that underlies them wears out individual life by its intensity; and the family depending on that life for its maintenance is frequently reduced to poverty for which no previous schooling has prepared it. Besides, a sudden accession to wealth by a "lucky hit" is seldom productive of permanent benefit. Habits of dis-

sipation, vulgar display, extravagant tastes—these usually characterize the children of successful speculators, and land them back on the same social level from which they had been accidentally raised. Nor do they enjoy any real happiness during their brief elevation. They rent or buy a magnificent mansion, fill it with costly furniture, stock their cellars with rarest wines, and clothe themselves in the latest fashions. They sit in their drawing-room expecting visitors; but no visitors appear. They drive out; but no one knows them. They sit down to dinner; but they are painfully conscious that the servants are criticising unmercifully their ignorance of refined table habits, their ungainly postures, and their chapped hands. A week of such a life makes them thoroughly miserable; a month drives them to the verge of despair.

You must not think, however, that in cautioning you against speculation I would in any way interfere with business enterprise. Invest your money, by all means, in whatever concern pays the largest dividend; but let the payment depend on prudent management, on the discharge of a public service, or the supply of a public want, and not on the fluctuations of the share or

money market, or the prospects of the wheat crop some six months before the harvest. Money made by prudent judgment and forethought brings infinitely more satisfaction to the maker than what comes from the sudden and unexpected rise of stocks or funds, or from the accidental turn of a certain color or number.

If you seriously wish to get on creditably and successfully in life, you must turn your face not only against gambling, but against all questionable modes of transacting business and making money. I will take a few cases to illustrate my meaning.

Robinson, who had been out of employment for several months and reduced in consequence to a very low financial ebb, got a situation lately through the influence of some friends. He considers, however, that the salary is too low for the work required of him; and he takes every opportunity that occurs to recoup himself. By this means his income is become highly satisfactory, and he is able not only to support his family in comfort, but to lay aside every month a considerable sum in the savings-bank.

I don't think, however, that Robinson is at all happy. A voice within him that cannot be stilled

tells him that he is doing wrong and that he will be bound to make restitution of the whole amount of his pilfering, even though he never be detected. He knows there is no salvation, no hope of heaven without such restitution. What is the consequence? He is gradually drifting into a state of unbelief in the truths and duties of religion. No one can live long at war with his conscience; and Robinson finds that his conscience becomes less and less troublesome the farther he casts the ties of religion from him.

But the inner voice of the soul, stilled during life, has a terrible wakening at the approach of death. It rises serpent-like before the disturbed vision, hissing the one word Restitution into the affrighted ear. But how can restitution be made? Can he reduce his children to beggary? Can he brand his memory with the stigma of systematic theft? Can he whisper his guilt even to his nearest relative? And yet, can he go before his Judge with unrepaired wrong, unforgiven sin on his soul?

It is surely better and more prudent to live an honest, upright life, even in poverty, than to expose one's self to the agony and torture of despair in one's dying moments.

Another case : Mr. Dun owns a store in which he sells second-class value at first-class prices, whenever he can deceive his customers in the quality of his goods. He also makes up his parcels under weight and gives short measure. He professes to give unlimited credit ; but he charges heavy interest on outstanding debts from the first day they are contracted. He is not satisfied with ordinary profits ; he takes more pleasure in a cent made by crooked dealing than in a dollar acquired in the legitimate course of business. His ruling passion is not love of money, but "smartness." His whole life is devoted to the one object of taking people in ; and the more cunningly he succeeds, the more he is gratified.

He trains his children in his own principles. He seizes every opportunity of instilling into them the duty of taking in every one they can, but never allowing themselves to be caught napping by others. All generous impulses, all belief or trust in men, he sneers at as the silly, mawkish weakness of a greenhorn.

If society were really to be what Mr. Dun represents it, life would be a wretched, intolerable yoke. Every man's hand would be armed either covertly or openly against his neighbor.

Friendship would be only another name for hypocrisy; truth would be the cloak of falsehood; justice and honesty, the bait used by thieves and swindlers to catch the gullible and unsuspecting.

With all his cleverness, Mr. Dun never "gets on." His customers drop off one by one; his goods are left on his hands; his creditors come down on him and sell him out. Every one is surprised that such a smart man of business is so unfortunate; but men of his own stamp believe that he has made a large haul, and has migrated to a neighboring town to make another. Mr. Dun is at no pains to undeceive them.


I might cite, if necessary, many other cases of questionable business transactions by which men seek to outstrip their neighbor in the competition for wealth. Underlying that competition and inspiring it with overstrained energy is the false and misleading principle that "wealth constitutes happiness." Now, I do not deny the power, almost unlimited, both for good and evil, that wealth confers on its possessor. I do not dispute the laudable ambition of those who aim by steady work to give their children a high-class education, and to secure for themselves refined and

comfortable homes in their declining years. But the man who makes money by cheating or swindling is incapable, by the very constitution of his mind and character, of enjoying even the pleasant prospect of such domestic repose. He dreads the idea of retiring from active life, because he knows his solitude will be haunted by the phantoms of those whom he ruined in business. His ill-gotten money will be able to purchase him no ease or comfort that he can enjoy. As a traveller in bodily pain derives no relief or pleasure from the beautiful scenery through which he passes, so the man whose conscience is ill at ease for wrong committed may live in a palace and be surrounded with all the luxuries that wealth can purchase; but he takes no pride in them; they bring him no happiness; they are powerless to deaden the poignant heart-pain that is the unfailing Nemesis of every life like his.

To sum up this chapter, then, in a few words: Avoid gambling and speculation as a means of making money. Avoid also crooked and *shady* paths to wealth. Be upright and honorable in your dealings.

CHAPTER XII.

GOLD-WORSHIP.

N the fierce and world-wide striving and jostling for wealth that characterize our time, no one can expect to secure a respectable competence for himself and his family unless he strives and jostles on his part, with brain and muscle, in the thick of the contest. Without a fair amount of this world's wealth you will find life dreary and uncomfortable, and your neighbor, no matter what be his station or profession, as cold and unsympathetic as if your poverty were some revolting, social crime. Even the communist makes a vast difference between a beggar and a millionaire. He may sneer at wealth and denounce it; but if you look behind the scene you will find him intent on converting his sneers and denunciations into money. If you step up to him and ask him for a dollar he will look askance at you and pass you by.

Now, as I have said already, you are perfectly justified in making what money you legitimately can make by your labor or trade or profession. You are also justified in securing a provision for your old age and for those depending on you ; and you are justified in aspiring to make your home as tasteful and refined and elegant as your salary or wages can afford. To accomplish this justifiable purpose you must give yourself up to your business as thoroughly and undividedly as the miser who makes money-getting the end of his being. The great difference between you and him must be, not in the energy with which each of you works, but in the end he sets before him. With you success is but a means to a higher object ; with him it is the very end that he seeks, and in which he places all his happiness.

This distinction is intelligible enough on paper, but in every-day life it is often lost sight of. A merchant who began business with the sole intention of educating his children respectably and giving them a fair start in life gradually drifts into a fondness for money-making that grows into a ruling passion and has no longer any reference to his original object. He amasses wealth for its own sake, not for the good he can effect

by it, or for the happiness it can procure him. He even stints himself and those depending on him in many innocent indulgences and relaxations; because for his own part he has no taste for them and cannot see their utility, and for his children, he feels bound to mould them in his own penurious character.

But whatever he may think to the contrary, his children will never take kindly to his training. They will lose all love and respect for him; they will ridicule him in his absence, however they may keep up appearances before his face; and in their inmost hearts they will long for his death, that they may enjoy his hoarded wealth.

Unfortunate, deluded father! Could he return to life a few years after the grave had closed on him, what agony he would experience in seeing the headlong, break-neck pace at which his children are hastening to beggary! And sharper agony still, his own hard-earned money supplies the means of their ruin!

All parents naturally wish to leave their children comfortably settled; but most of them take a mistaken course in securing that object. They think money alone can do it, forgetting that money given to a young person of weak or vicious

character proves generally the occasion of his ruin. Having no necessity to work, he lives in idleness. Having strong passions and the means of indulging them, he allows them to draw him into all kinds of excess. His youth is wasted, his talents are abused, his name is a by-word of scorn and disgust in every decent home. And yet, had he been obliged to work for his living, he might have filled a useful and honorable place in society. He might have established for himself a stainless character and built up a home where loving hands would minister to his comforts and loving hearts would brighten and cheer him with their sunshine.

Instead of this result, we find him after a few years of dissipation broken down in health, stripped of his last dollar, abandoned by his boon companions. His credit is gone with his money, and he knows not where to get his dinner. If you could look into his soul as he reviews his past folly, you would find him curse the money that was the occasion of his idleness and dissipation. Aye, and perhaps he would be so unthankful as to curse also the shortsightedness of those who left it to him. What a sad return for the dreary, anxious years spent in accumulating that

money! What a contrast to the bright vision that alone cheered those years, a vision of a family name raised to social eminence, of wealth developed into a national power, of children and grandchildren blessing the name and memory of him who had been the founder of their fortunes.

Spare no money on the intellectual and moral training of your children. Surround them with all necessary helps toward a noble life. Give them a loathing for every low temptation that would drag them into the mire. Fit them for the highest and most respectable professions or positions for which they are adapted. Teach them self-reliance, energy, industry, love of work. When you will have done all this for each of your children, you may rest satisfied that you have fulfilled your duty toward them nobly and well; and you may then stretch out a generous, helping hand to the church and school and orphanage and hospital, where devoted, self-sacrificing men and women (grudgingly helped) are coping bravely with crime and ignorance and poverty and disease. What happiness will spring from every kindly act you thus do for others! What blessings from grateful hearts will cheer you on your way through life! What consola-

tion and hope will soothe your dying moments from the consciousness of having discharged your duty to every one around you in a large and liberal spirit !

One of the repulsive effects of gold-worship is the narrow, selfish character it begets. If society is anything more than a name, it should bind men into a compact, organized, living body, the members of which ought to be in communion and sympathy one with another. The strong should help the weak ; the healthy, the diseased ; those who are fortunate and happy, the mournful and depressed. This may seem to be an Utopian idea to propound ; but it is the central idea of the moral order which Christianity aspires to establish—an idea fermenting in men's souls since it was first revealed in Judea, and working its way imperceptibly to its complete realization. The overthrow of arbitrary government, the emancipation of the slave, the rights of labor, popular suffrage—these and many other liberal measures give hopeful promise of still greater measures to be yet secured, and show beyond question the tendency of men's minds toward that universal brotherhood which was proclaimed and ratified on Calvary nearly nineteen centuries ago.

The man who makes gold his idol shuts out all claims of society on him for help. He owns no kinship with those who suffer, or fall, or are unfortunate in the race of life. Were every one to be of his disposition, were there no more charity or tenderness in the world, were wealth to tyrannize over poverty, and capital over labor, without any softening influence of religion or humanity, there would be an end of all intercourse among men ; government would be an impossibility ; anarchy would rule supreme.

I fear, however, these general views of the consequences of gold-worship will have no appreciable effect on one already infected with the passion of avarice. Indeed, I do not know any human motive strong enough to cure the victim of this passion. It is a kind of dropsy of the soul ; and an insatiable thirst for money in its ordinary and most fatal symptom. But it may do some good at least to others to point out a few more of its hateful effects.

The miser is so wrapped up in himself that he never makes a friend, and never, through all his grubbing, crusty life, enjoys an hour's pleasant, expansive, social intercourse. Even with his wife and children he is distant and repellant.

He suspects every one ; attributes narrow, selfish motives to every one ; guards himself against every one at all points and with every conceivable device.

Now, the usual consequence of this isolation from others and want of mental relaxation, especially when combined with absorption in one pursuit, is insanity or monomania. The mind must be unbent from time to time, if it be expected to retain its tone and elasticity. It must enter into communion with other minds, it must compare ideas and discuss principles with them, or else it will eat into itself like rust, and " spoil like bales unopened to the sun."

A friendless man enslaved by avarice is necessarily unhappy. He sees bright, glad faces around him, and hears pleasant voices engaged in cheerful conversation, while he himself sits solitary and taciturn, with chilling dampness and melancholy oozing from every feature of his countenance. The joy of others is wormwood to him ; and their laughter grates on his soul like the reopening of a half-healed wound. Sometimes a good-natured acquaintance will clap him on the shoulder and try to draw him out of his shell. But the attempt will be met by such a

gruff repulse that it will not be repeated. And yet the miser envies in secret the high spirits which he professes to despise. He would give anything—but money—to be able to unbend himself for an hour, even in the company of his wife and children.

It may be thought by some that avarice promotes the interests of society by the accumulation of wealth, and that therefore it is unpatriotic to inveigh against it. But capital made by usurious dealings is a curse instead of a blessing to a community. It robs labor of its legitimate reward, gives the laborer no chance to rise in the social scale, and gathers into the hands of an individual or a corporation money and political power that would be more safely and wisely diffused among the people. It is not the amount of wealth in a country, but its general diffusion, that constitutes national prosperity. Yet the tendency of avarice is to create an oligarchy of wealth that will hold agriculture and commerce in an iron grip, that will paralyze industry and enterprise, and that aspires to seize the reins of political power. The people of this country need be very vigilant of their rights, or they will one day find themselves ruled by railway kings and

capitalists who will direct legislation to their own selfish, unworthy ends.

“But these observations,” I hear some one exclaim, “are entirely uncalled for and out of place. We have no misers in this country ; no gold-worshippers ; no victims of the passion of avarice. We make money by honest work, and we spend it freely on ourselves and our families. We have, no doubt, some millionaires among us ; but it is only by an abuse of language that they can be called misers.”

It is true, I admit in reply to this objection, that the classical type of miser is exceedingly rare, if at all known, among us. No one nowadays starves himself on stale crusts of bread and dresses in rags while he is hiding away rolls of dollars in secret crevices and used-up articles of crockery. This style of avarice is gone out of fashion—perhaps because it was found not to “pay.” But have we no children among us taught from their cradle upwards that the only “almighty” thing in creation is the dollar ; that the only happy man is the capitalist, and the only rational occupation the pursuit of wealth ? And when those young men go to college, are they never cautioned against the liberal branches of the curriculum—never told that the only sub-


jects to which they are to give undivided attention are writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, everything else being of little or no account?

Let us follow these young men into business and see what principles they follow. As to religion, they hold no principles whatever. It has no commercial value. It is like an ought before a whole number; it means nothing and is out of place. Politics they identify with party tactics, corruption at the polling-booths, office-seeking, and appropriation of public money. In social life they pride themselves on their uncouth, vulgar habits, despise refined tastes, and know absolutely nothing of books, music, or art. Yet they think themselves the cream of the highest modern civilization because they are successful men of business and stand in high repute with their bankers.

Men of this stamp are not, I venture to think, rare among us; and they have all the essential characteristics of the unamiable misers of fiction and history. Money is their only god. Principle, honor, truth, justice, are only secondary considerations where money is in question. Life, in their view of it, has but one end, to make money—by fair means if possible—but to make it anyhow.

CHAPTER XIII.

PRIDE AND AMBITION.

F we knew all the truth about ourselves we should find little reason to place ourselves above our neighbors, and look down on them with arrogance or contempt. Our superiority of mind or person comes to us, with every natural and supernatural gift, from God, and may be taken from us at any moment, by a fit of illness or some other natural cause. Our station in life, no matter how exalted, is an outward, accidental circumstance that adds nothing to our real character. More idiots and fools belong to the upper classes of society than to the lower; yet no one but a sycophant would put them on a level with men of sense and sterling character, however low may be their position. Our wealth too, whether inherited or acquired by industry, gives us no right to despise our penniless brothers or exact their homage in return for our patronage. We are not one whit their

superiors because we own splendid mansions and equipages and have princely incomes to draw upon. In all that constitutes true manhood,—honor, fidelity, truth, purity,—the poor and the rich are on an equal footing. Neither can throw the blame of a mean, unworthy life on the cut of his clothes or the extent of his income. Does it follow, then, that we should go out into the streets and slums and by-ways, and bring in all the unwashed we can find, and seat them at our dinner-tables? Should we descend to the level of the rude and uneducated, adopt their manners, and live in familiar intercourse with them? Such an idea is, of course, too ridiculous to be seriously put forward. It is a wise arrangement of society, founded in human nature, that there should be artificial grades and distinctions, the highest, however, open to the poorest man or woman to attain. Energy and merit are thus rewarded, by being made the stepping-stones to the highest prizes of life ; and there are no legitimate grounds left for jealousy and heart-burning between the lower and the upper classes.

But as soon as a man manifests his ability and determination to rise to eminence, and takes the first step towards it, pride shows itself in two

ugly forms to check his upward course. Those above him do their utmost to cast him down ; while those below strain every nerve to drag him back. This ungenerous treatment is not confined to political aspirants ; it extends to private individuals in the narrowest circles of our cities and towns. A merchant began life as an errand lad. When he was promoted to a place in his employer's store his young companions hooted him and called him vile names. After a few years, his industry and trustworthiness promoted him to the position of foreman ; and he became in consequence the butt of his companions' ridicule, and even the subject of their scurrilous lampoons. Some years of steady work passed by, and he found himself able to open business on his own account. Scarcely had he done so, when his fellow-merchants raised a new outcry against him, raked up his early history, questioned the respectability of his parentage, and insinuated his insolvency as openly as they could do without incurring the charge of libel. He is now about to purchase a suburban residence for his family ; and he is prepared for a fresh storm of abuse and insult from his aristocratic neighbors.

It may be said that this opposition is due to

envy rather than to pride ; but pride and envy are both branches from the same root—an excessive, overweening estimate and love of one's own excellence.

Now, suppose that merchant, whom we may call Mr. Simpson, attributes to himself all the credit of his success in life. He believes himself accountable to no outward source, either divine or human, for the business talents by which he has risen to wealth. He prides himself on being self-made and self-sufficient. He regards the same necessary connection to exist between himself and the position he has attained as between any natural cause and its effect. God is shut out from his life and thoughts, and although without God he cannot account to himself for his existence, talents, success—anything, in fact, within him or around him, still he reasons and calculates and acts as if he were the author of his own life, and the supreme ruler of his destiny.

The inconsequence and folly of this train of thought scarcely occurs to Mr. Simpson, until he meets with unforeseen business reverses, and is prostrated by a severe attack of illness. It then strikes him forcibly that the reverses are unaccountable on his theory of life. There must be

some invisible and supreme agency, regulating by a law of its own all human events, and spoiling at will the most exact and far-reaching calculations.

But what strikes him as more unaccountable still is his physical prostration. Were his health to be absolutely his own, coming from himself and due to no outside cause, why should it not depend on his will? Who has the right or power to take it away at pleasure? Surely the same who gave it; who gave life, talent, success—everything; the Creator and Ruler of the universe, God.

A conviction of this kind, no matter how produced, does not remain inoperative in a man of active, energetic mind. On the contrary, it makes him look on the endowments of life, and on life itself, as a stewardship for which he will have to render a strict account. Failure, then, or success; poverty or wealth; popularity or contempt—these are matters of secondary importance in the new light thrown on his pathway. To do his duty faithfully and well; to accept every reverse with patient resignation; to regard his neighbor as a brother and member of his Father's household, helping him and consol-

ing him according to his need—these are the practical results to which reason itself guides one who is not blinded by pride to his insignificance in the divine plan of the universe.

“Self-made” men like Mr. Simpson are very apt to treat those in their employment with harshness and even cruelty, and to degrade them, as far as they are allowed, to the position of slaves. Pride is at the root of this odious tyranny; for no one unblinded by that passion could trample with indifference on the rights of a fellow-being, or think he had purchased the power of doing so at so many dollars a week. However, the laborer himself is partly to blame for this degradation. He allows himself to be classed with patent machines, and he haggles only over the means of keeping himself in working order. The Church would teach employer and employed the dignity of labor, and the reverence due to humanity, and would thus establish cordial relations between the one and the other. But the Church is disregarded and pushed aside for the scientist and the political or social economist, who lead the multitude in a vicious circle from slavery to slavery.

Let us now turn to some other forms of pride

that confront us in every-day social life. Here is a lady, Mrs. Bowman, who will supply us with some illustrations. Mrs. Bowman leads the fashion in the town where she resides. She dresses in the highest style, drives the handsomest pair of horses, lives in the most aristocratic mansion, and gives the most splendid entertainments of any lady in the neighborhood. This form of pride is so common among ladies who are above household work, and who nurse and rear their children by proxy, that it would scarcely call for special remark, were it not productive of some questionable and rather unpleasant results. One of these is, that Mrs. Bowman is plunging headlong into debt to keep up appearances. Her husband, who is a social nonentity, although holding a lucrative government appointment, is too weak to oppose any effective resistance to her ruinous extravagance. He foresees the inevitable crash that is looming darker and darker over his home, but he thinks it too late now to begin retrenchment. Meanwhile his children are being spoiled for any useful position or employment; their education, except in frivolity and French novels, is being wholly neg-

lected ; and as to moral training, they are utterly ignorant of its most elementary principles.

There are ladies of Mrs. Bowman's type in every grade of society. That small tradesman cannot understand how his profits at the end of each year are so very small. He never suspects that his wife could explain the reason if she chose ; or that her and her daughters' millinery bills are many times larger than they are represented.

Another form of fashionable pride consists in sentimental patronage of the poor. Ladies without a particle of Christian charity get a craze for visiting the slums of large cities. There is a romance, an æsthetic beauty about the work that makes it extremely attractive—in theory. So they drive with their maids after lunch to some particularly disreputable locality. Let us accompany one of them into a poor laboring-man's cottage and see how she succeeds.

The laboring-man is sitting in his shirt-sleeves at the fire. He has evidently been drinking, as he overbalances himself and falls when he attempts to rise on the entrance of the strangers. His wife is nursing a baby a few months old ;

and three other children, the eldest not seven years, are sprawling on the floor.

Here is an opportunity for the lady's zeal. She begins to lecture him on intemperance, reads some extracts from a pamphlet on the subject, dilates in strong language on the vices of the lower classes in general; and winds up with a dismal picture of himself in his grave and his wife and children begging.

She then turns to the woman, and criticises unmercifully her slatternly appearance as well as the untidy state of the room and of the children.

The half-drunken husband listens with a good-humored, sheepish look to the portion of the lecture addressed to himself. But when he hears his wife abused he grows impatient and reddens to the roots of his frowzy hair. He hears the lady out, however; and when she has done, he asks :

"May I put you a question or two, ma'am?"

"Certainly," she replies; "as many as you wish."

"I'd like to know, ma'am, have you any people in your class of life who take more drink than is good for them? Do you know any?"

“Yes, I know a few; but why do you ask?”

“I ask, ma’am, because if you want to come and lecture us, you had better come with clean hands. Give us good example, ma’am, before you preach to us. Or as long as you have drunkenness in your own class go and reclaim them, because they are nearer to you, before you come to reclaim us.

“Now, another question, ma’am: Which is it better for a woman to have—a pure, honest, faithful heart, or a silk dress and golden bracelets?”

“The former, of course.”

“Very good, ma’am. Go, then, and find out and reclaim all those of your own order whose names get into the papers every day. And when you have done with them come and lecture our wives on the way to do up their hair and to wash their children. I wish you good-afternoon, ma’am; and as you don’t expect me or my wife to return your visit, I hope you will see the propriety of not calling on us again.”

The lady returns to her carriage and drives home with a surfeit of district-visiting and a conviction that the lower classes are beyond reclamation.

It would be well, however, if pride never took

a worse form than this, of patronizing and lecturing the poor. I refer to the practice here, chiefly to point out the irritation it causes among those whom it intends to serve. The laboring-classes have a pride of their own which must be considered by those who would help them. They have also their virtues as well as their defects; and it is as unjust as it is impolitic to tell them that they are wholly vicious and corrupt. In truth, missionary work belongs exclusively to ecclesiastical organizations; and if we are sincerely anxious that it should succeed, we should contribute generously to every call it makes on us, but never intrude ourselves on its work.


Ambition is that form of pride which consists in excessive love of fame or power. It is most prevalent in young and ardent minds; and as it restrains the baser passions and urges men to noble aims and energetic work it should be regulated rather than discountenanced or checked.

Some young people, however, destroy their usefulness in life by aiming at too high an object, or by not weighing well their fitness for the position to which they aspire. If they be wise, they will take the advice of some candid, trusty friend on the pursuit to which they intend to direct

their energies. I know advice is generally thrown away on the inexperienced. Children have to burn their fingers before they keep at a safe distance from the fire. But on this important point of the selection of an outlet for one's ambition advice is absolutely necessary. No one can judge safely of his own talents and capabilities; for the eyes of the soul, like those of the body, seem made to look outwards rather than inwards.

CHAPTER XIV.

SLOTH.

OME people shirk duty whenever they possibly can. Others get through it in a slip-shod, half-hearted way, or dawdle over it as if they were taking physic. Both are deservedly ranked among the slothful, and form the bulk of those who grumble against hard times, bad laws, the tyranny of capital, etc., etc.

There is another class of slothful people who have nothing to do, chiefly because they are too lazy to look for employment, or to keep it when they find it. Some of them, however, are independent of work, having large incomes to support them. If these be young and healthy, their want of occupation generally drives them into mischief of one kind or another.

Among young ladies the habit of sloth frequently develops into a passion for novel-reading. Every faculty except the imagination falls into a state of lethargy. The body aches all over

at the mere suggestion of work. It is distressful to them even to write a letter, or to go to church, or to prepare for dinner. I do not know a more worthless life than that of an habitual novel-reader. Not only is valuable time wasted by the practice, but the energies become dull and rusty; the earnest purpose of life is disregarded; the head is turned by silly, romantic admiration of impossible heroes and heroines; and the result is thorough disgust and contempt for commonplace surroundings and every-day duties.

I must not leave you under the impression, however, that I consider all novel-reading injurious and unprofitable. As a relaxation after an honest day's work, or as a pleasant occupation of the mind in case of prostration or convalescence, a well-chosen novel may do immense good. But it should be *well chosen*. I do not mean that it should always be written by one of our own religion, or written *expressly* to enforce some moral lesson. What I would insist on is, that the character of the writer should give a sufficient guarantee for the good taste, and elevated tone, and refining influence of the work.

Sloth is sometimes due to physical causes. When the body is indisposed it naturally seeks

to recover tone and vigor by rest ; and it is unwise to force it to work of which it feels itself at the time incapable. There is often more real profit derived from going into the country for a day, or settling down at the seaside for a few weeks in the summer, than holding on to one's business with aching head and lost appetite and sleepless nights.

But the sloth of which I speak here is the result of moral causes alone. Chief among these is the want of a strong, clearly defined, satisfactory motive for work. If you keep such a motive before you I can safely guarantee that you will never fall into lazy habits. For instance, you have taken a large farm and have brought your young wife to live on it. It is unfenced, and covered with trees that must be cut down and cleared away. The work before you, when you go out the first morning after your arrival, seems dreary and disheartening. How many an ax-stroke will be required to clear that forest land ! How many a year of patient work and waiting before you will have raised a comfortable home, surrounded by paddocks and sheep-walks and extensive corn-fields ! If you think only of the work, you will fold your arms and sit down in despair. But if

you fill your mind with a glowing picture of the end you have in view, and keep that picture always before you, and never let the thought of failure come near you, then, instead of folding your arms and sitting down, you will throw yourself into your work with energy and determination ; you will form your plans with prudent foresight and deliberation, and execute them with precision.

I consider this subject, of the motive for which we work, of such importance, that I dwell on it here somewhat longer than may at first sight seem necessary. A slave may be made to pick cotton under terror of the lash ; but because he has no other inducement or motive to work, if you take away the terror he ceases the cotton-picking and sits down. If, however, you have promised him a new dress and a holiday for doing his work satisfactorily, he will probably hesitate before he idles his time in your absence. He will compare the heat of the day and the fatigue of his employment and the pleasure of doing nothing, on the one hand, with the delightful vision of a day's freedom and a new suit of clothes, on the other ; and he will decide in favor of work or rest according to his free inclination.

But if you say to him : “Now, Sam, look here. Pick that cotton carefully. Don’t idle a moment; and when you will have finished it, I will give you your freedom.” This additional inducement would be so strong, that although Sam would be still a free agent, he would scarcely require time to make up his mind to go to his work with a will and get it over. The heat of the day would not appear at all unpleasant; and the love of rest in the cool shade would be disregarded for the greater love of freedom during all the years of his life.

Now, there is another motive which might make Sam get through his cotton-picking quite as honestly and thoroughly as the assurance of his freedom. It is the motive of gratitude and love. If you had attached him to you by kindly, gentle treatment; if you had never put him in chains, or cut him with the lash; if you had housed him well, fed and clothed him well, and used him more as your child than your slave—if by these means you had made him devoted to you, the expression of your wish or the hope of a smile and word of approval from you would in all probability be a sufficient motive to induce him to do his work with fidelity and care.

Here, then, we have three leading motives : fear, self-interest, and love, each of which determines us more or less strongly to work. But where they are all three combined, and bring their united strength to bear on the will, there sloth should be an impossibility, and the danger to be guarded against should rather be excessive activity than dormant energies, that needed the goad and the spur to rouse them to action.

If we carefully reflect on the profession we follow or the business in which we are employed, we shall find that one or more of the motives of fear, self-interest, and love influences us consciously or unconsciously, in exact proportion to the estimate we form of our work and the way in which we discharge its duties. Take the example of a physician. He has an excellent practice, and is rising rapidly in his profession. But suppose he acquire a passion for drink and gambling, what will be the consequence? His patients will have no confidence in him, and will drop off one by one. His income will be reduced until it be unable to support his family. He will drift deeper and deeper into debt until he be sold out. Eventually, broken down in health, a confirmed drunkard, a disgrace to his

profession, he will either commit suicide, or end his days in a mad-house, or meet with some other melancholy death. The fear of such a result has a considerable influence on professional and business people. Many of them, indeed, would care little for their self-interest, and perhaps less for the other motive of love of their family; but when they think of the degradation—the loss of reputation and caste—to which sloth and neglect of duty will inevitably lead them, their self-respect is roused, and they determine to save their character at any sacrifice.

It would be easy to illustrate by other examples how powerfully self-interest sustains us in the most arduous enterprises, and represses that love of ease and repose to which we all naturally incline. As to the motive of love, it includes love of our family depending on us for their support; love of our employer who has laden us with kindnesses; and love of our work itself, to which we are enthusiastically devoted. This threefold love cannot be overestimated, not only as a counter-motive to sloth, but as an effective stimulus to steady and untiring activity.

What I would recommend, then, is this. Keep always before you, first, a vivid picture of the

consequences to which neglect of duty invariably leads. This is the motive of fear. Next, represent to yourself the honor and emolument you will acquire by uniform, unswerving application to your profession or business. This is self-interest. Thirdly, love your business for its own sake ; love those for whom you work, if it be at all possible ; and especially love your family, and be determined to leave them, when you die, if not wealth, yet something infinitely more precious—the memory of an upright, noble character and of an unsullied name. Join these three motives together ; keep them before you, as the miser keeps before him the vision of golden stores ; look at them long and steadily when weariness creeps on you and you feel the heat of the day oppressive, and you are tempted to the cool, wayside shade. You will find them an unfailing fountain of fresh vigor and renewed hope. They will lighten your burden when it seems most oppressive, and cheer and brighten your way when it is most overcast with clouds.

It may cause some comment that I do not include *duty* among the leading motives to work. A sense of duty, however, has but slight influence on the will, unless it be combined with fear of

consequences, or self-interest, or love. Very few are so spiritual as to love obedience to authority for its own sake. Hence, if you wish to enforce it, you must show the motives that recommend it; and they must be those of which I have just spoken.

Here some one may say: "Your observations may be serviceable to a man who has a respectable business or profession with a bright future before it. But here am I up to my neck in debt, in an employment that shows not a bright spot in the prospect before me, no matter how far I may look. As to my family, they have turned against me, and I have no inducement to provide for them. My employer is a hard taskmaster whom no one could love. I see no reason why I should love work rather than rest, except that it enables me to keep soul and body together."

In reply, I say that men often bring misfortune and unhappiness on themselves by their own imprudence and folly. When they do so, they must bear the consequences as far as they cannot be remedied. But those consequences are often unduly exaggerated. This man, for instance, is overwhelmed with debt. Is he taking any straightforward, honorable course to pay it off?

Is he living within his income? Does he deprive himself of little comforts with the object of satisfying his creditors as soon as possible? I fear he does none of these things; because if he did there would be more cheerfulness and hope in his words. He would have a noble object before him in the determination to get out of debt; and with such an object he could not take the despondent view of life which he appears to take.

Then again, he believes there is no future in the work in which he is engaged. But he may see a future in it if he will. It may help him to discharge his debts; it may help him to lay by something after having done so, for his old age; it keeps him at present from beggary and starvation. These are all motives that will become stronger and brighter the more they are studied. Let him study them and see the result.


As to his family and his domestic life, he may not be able to bring about there a state of ideal happiness; but by patient effort, by prudent management, by love, he may bring about salutary changes of which he has no hope or conception now. At least the trial will bring its own reward.

I have now only a few words to add regarding

the habit of sloth in very young people. It comes principally from parents and teachers giving them no strong inducements to work. They point out something to do, and tell them they *must* do it. Like little slaves, they work through physical fear as long as the eyes of parents or superiors are on them. But when the poor children are left to themselves they naturally—I should even say, instinctively—turn from their odious, motiveless tasks to indulge the bent of their free will. First show a child *why* it should work, and then in nine cases out of ten it will work to your perfect satisfaction.

CHAPTER XV.

SOME OTHER VICES.

OUNG people anxious to get on in life should guard themselves with the utmost care from loose companions, from places of questionable character, and from improper reading. I know how extremely difficult it is to observe these precautions; yet I make them advisedly, and they *must* be observed, if one wishes to establish and preserve an unblemished character, and to avoid entanglements and pitfalls that would most probably ruin his chances of success.

A young person may perhaps say to himself: "I am quite capable of taking care of myself. I can go a certain distance; read certain books; join certain companions, and keep, notwithstanding, free from excess." No doubt he is quite honest in saying so, because he has unlimited confidence in his untried strength. He is scarcely prudent, however, in rejecting the uniform expe-

rience of his elders and rushing into the dangers against which they warn him.

He rushes into them, nevertheless ; and what is the consequence ? He becomes, after a very little, indifferent to his work and to the good opinion of his employer. He spurns every noble aspiration of his youth as an idle day-dream. He grows listless and abstracted, without energy, without enthusiasm, without a particle of the healthy, buoyant spirit that formerly characterized him.

The world is losing every year a large portion of its highest vitality through the excesses into which impurity leads its victims. Little of the soul-service of youth is given to the cause of humanity. During our college and university days we have bright visions of the noble, beneficent work we intend to accomplish in our different spheres of life. And we may accomplish it, if we persevere in our sublime purpose. But unfortunately, few are faithful to the promise of their youth ; few escape the influences of evil companionship ; few give more than the dregs of their manhood to the work to which they had dedicated all its overflowing fulness.

Besides the helps to a pure manhood already

recommended, I do not know any other more powerful, in the natural order, than to make love of your profession or work the ruling passion of your life. Throw yourself into it with all the energy of your soul ; aspire to become thorough master of it ; be contented to have no superior in the knowledge of everything connected with it. Study every element of beauty and attractiveness in it, until it fills your imagination to the exclusion of all hankering after other pursuits. In this way no room will be left for another ruling passion ; and the temptations that ordinarily beset youth will be easily put aside.

Here, however, a difficulty arises as to the employment of free time. Many young men begin life in large cities with the best intention of keeping out of dangerous company. But they gradually drift into it, because they have no other companions, and they must go somewhere.

Although I have already treated of this subject, its importance justifies me in referring to it again. If a young man could pass a few hours every evening with a respectable family of his own social standing, the time would be profitably spent, and he would scarcely require more indoor recreation. If, however, he had but one

family to visit, he could not, in ordinary cases, call on them oftener than once a week. How, then, is he to dispose of the remaining evenings? I believe he will find in most large cities one or more Young Men's Associations, with reading-rooms and recreation-halls provided for members. He can easily gain admission into one of these useful institutions, and enjoy himself in healthful, rational amusement. He may not, indeed, find these companions wholly to his liking; but he must not be too squeamish. He must make the most of his surroundings, remembering that he is infinitely better off in such a place than if he wandered aimlessly along the gas-lit streets.

Should there be no such place of wholesome resort for young men, then the local clergyman ought to be consulted on the choice of suitable companions. He will feel it a pleasing duty to establish social intercourse among the well-disposed youths of his congregation; and he will not think it foreign to his office to visit them occasionally and manifest an interest in their amusements.

I know few more amiable traits of character than the large-minded habit of making allowance for the faults of others. This habit is the un-

conscious outgrowth of Christian charity. It gives untold consolation to the unfortunate victim, perhaps, of slander; helps him out of his trouble, and wins his undying gratitude and friendship.

Current conversation, however, among acquaintances and friends is rarely distinguished by its charitableness. Men have no pity on a fallen brother; they make no allowance for him and admit no excuse or palliation of his guilt. The charge against him may be false or grossly exaggerated; it may have originated in the malice of some vile slanderer or the envy of some sneaking coward. But it matters not, as far as the verdict of men is concerned. He is condemned as soon as he is accused, and must bear the penalty, whether he be innocent or guilty.

We may condemn vice in unmeasured language, if we will; but we ought to have mercy on the sinner. He is never as thoroughly bad as the world makes him out; and at the worst, he is our brother. He may not have had our opportunities of keeping straight in the path of virtue; and we may not have had his temptations of swerving into crooked ways. Moreover, as long as Heaven spares him for repentance, we ought

not to take it on ourselves to cast him outside the pale of mercy.

Before we pass judgment in thought or language on our neighbor, we should call to mind with what tender pity Our Saviour treated the woman taken in adultery. He was sitting early one morning in the Temple, teaching the people, when the Scribes and Pharisees set her in the midst and said to Him: "Master, this woman was even now taken in adultery, and Moses commanded us to stone such a one; but what sayest Thou?" Jesus said to them: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." And they hearing this went out one by one, beginning at the eldest. And when Jesus alone remained, and the woman standing in the midst, He said to her: "Woman, where are they that accused thee? Hath no man condemned thee?" She said: "No man, Lord." And Jesus said: "Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more."

How very few among us would spread slanderous stories of our neighbor if the penalty for doing so were the unveiling of our own private lives to the public gaze! What gentle consideration for others should our own hidden shortcomings

teach us! There is frequently between the idol of fashionable society and the subject of the last scandal in high life only the accident of a mislaid letter or a blabbing servant. Should not this fact make us reflect seriously before we publish or repeat the story of another's guilt, no matter how convinced we may be of its truth?

This last remark leads me to explain to you a duty we owe our neighbor, of which, however, we often lose sight. Although we have certain and even personal knowledge of something injurious to his character, we are strictly bound to keep it to ourselves as long as it has not become public through other means. In fact, the sin of detraction consists in publishing some private fact or truth about our neighbor by which his character is injured. Yet there are many who seem to think that they injure others only by publishing falsehoods about them by which their good name is taken away. This is the sin of calumny or slander, and is of course greater than that of detraction; but both the one and the other is a violation of justice and equally entails the duty of reparation as a condition of pardon.

Envy is characteristic of a mean, contemptible nature—a nature that has not the spirit or the

ability to do a noble thing or lead a noble life, and that wastes in sadness and impotent rage at the sight of others' success. An envious man is never happy—except, perhaps, when some crushing blow falls on his prosperous neighbor and leaves him penniless. Such happiness is as fiend-like as any state of the human mind can be. Indeed, the malice that actuates an envious man in his thoughts and language, and sometimes in his conduct, cannot be explained by any ordinary weakness or shortcoming of our nature. The other passions allure us to happiness by forbidden paths; but envy sets before us the happiness of others, and has for its object to sadden and torment us by its contemplation.

In your way through life you will find many men who will never have a kind or pleasant word to say of their neighbor. They will seem to examine his character through a microscope, and find nothing in it but spots and flaws, however beautiful and perfect it may seem to others. I recommend you strongly to give those men as wide a berth as possible. Their disease is infectious; and if you do not keep aloof from them they will infect you with it.

The earth is wide enough for us all; and for

the few years we are to live on it, it is best and wisest to live in harmony and good-fellowship with our neighbor. Moreover, we are all members of one family of which God is the Father. We should, then, rejoice in our brother's success and condole with him in his misfortune. His happiness should redound to our happiness; and in his sorrow or distress we should hold out a helping hand to him until brighter days return. Believe me, this genial, large-hearted course of action will never cause you a moment's regret. It will fill you with joy in the consciousness of the joy you confer on others; it will gain you many fast and devoted friends; and the sacrifices it will impose on you will be "bread cast on the running waters." You shall find it again.

Lying is a habit against which it ought not to be necessary to caution any one into whose hands this book is likely to fall. Our Creator, in whose image we are made, is essential Truth; and therefore in every conscious word and act of our lives we are bound to be strictly truthful. In every solid building there are large, rough-hewn blocks of stone set in the foundation; and although they are hidden from the view and contribute nothing to the beauty of the edifice, yet they are essential

to its strength and permanence, and they are the first element to be considered in estimating its value. Now, in building up a character for ourselves, truthfulness must be one of the foundation-stones, if not the principal or corner one. A generous disposition, winning manners, polished address, these and all the other qualities and accomplishments that go to make up what the world calls a gentleman are incomplete and almost valueless if they be not grounded on sterling truthfulness and honesty. An unreliable man may possess very brilliant talents and may be surrounded by a coterie of enthusiastic admirers; but he never achieves any permanent good, and never secures more than a transitory fame. His personal character commands no respect. Earnest, high-minded men despise it. Even the unthinking, at first dazzled by its sparkling lustre, come after a little to see the ugly flaw that underlies the surface.

In business and professional life truthfulness is an absolute necessity. No success is attained without it. Creditors will naturally hesitate to entrust their goods to a man on whose word they cannot rely. Customers, on the other hand, will

scarcely continue to deal with one in whose statements or accounts they have no confidence.

So, too, a lawyer or a physician who has acquired a character for unreliability may be prepared for a falling-off of public patronage. Where honest money is paid, honest advice or value is expected in return. Professional gentlemen are fairly well paid for their services ; and they should be conscientious in making those services as useful as possible to their clients.

In conclusion, I must impress on you as distinctly and emphatically as possible, that you will never succeed in avoiding the vices mentioned in this or the preceding chapters unless you be helped by supernatural motives and divine grace. A life of merely natural goodness is a chimera, a snare, an impossibility. To resist the temptations that will encounter you in the world, to keep pure, and temperate, and truthful, and honest, you must have recourse to Heaven to aid you ; you must be faithful to your religious obligations ; above all, you must have a strong, living, practical faith in all that the Church teaches you about life, and death, and judgment, and eternity.

CHAPTER XVI.

INDEPENDENCE OF CHARACTER.



MAN of weak, pliant character is never respected. He may, indeed, get through life smoothly, make no enemies, and never be vilified or slandered. But he is looked on as a nonentity. He has no fixed opinions or principles; he never stands up for religion or truth or country when one or other of them is attacked; he is too timorous to express dissent from other people's views, no matter how opposed they may be to his own.

Men of this class form the rank and file of political parties. They are driven like sheep in flocks to the ballot-boxes. They give their votes for rulers and legislators whose tactics and principles they mildly abhor. When you ask them indignantly why they do so, they look at you deprecatingly, shrug their shoulders, and observe: "Anything for a quiet life."

If you observe four or five men discussing

some current topic, you will generally find among them at least one specimen of this jelly-like type of character of which I speak. He will nod approval, smile, shake his head, answer, "Yes," "Undoubtedly," "Not at all," in perfect unison with the spokesman of the party. He has an uneasy consciousness that he is not acting a manly part in not giving expression to his individual views; but he feels tongue-tied—hypnotized—under the influence of the leading spirit, and he allows himself to be swayed and led as if he had no will of his own.

If the subject of conversation in such a gathering be the private life of a neighbor, and if he be charged with crimes or misdemeanors that lower him in public esteem, then whoever knows such charges to be false, and is present where they are made, is strictly bound to contradict them, under pain of being branded as a mean-spirited coward.

Political questions, however, are allowed to be decided by the loudest talkers. Browbeaters have everything their own way on public platforms, because respectability seems to be identified with weakness of character. Yet every citizen is obliged to contribute his quota to the prosperity and right government of his country.

He is bound to denounce jobbery and maladministration at every fitting opportunity, and to do all in his power, in public and private, toward the formation of a noble, unselfish spirit of patriotism among the people.

But you will say, "How can a man with any self-respect mix with a pack of hungry place-seekers, who are incapable of appreciating sound political ideas?" I reply, You may not perhaps have nerve sufficient to sustain you in a speech on the platform. Every one is not an orator, either born or made. But you have ample opportunities of doing as much good in private as you could do by speaking before a crowded audience. In the shop or the office, in the street or at the dinner-table, you can express your honest convictions on the question of the hour fearlessly and independently. Other men of similar views will rally round you; and the more earnest you are, the more extensive will be your following and the influence you will command. It is not necessary to enter into public life or become a public character to do this. There is quite enough of honest, capable men ready to advance, in public, opinions such as yours; but what they want is a

backing of stanch, independent men on whom they can rely at the ballot-boxes.

It is the fashion to throw all the blame of political and administrative mismanagement on noisy, active minorities that obtain the reins of government by energy and organization ; but the truth is, that the majority which allows them to get into power by its supine negligence is at least equally to blame. If the bulk of a nation permit a clique to misgovern it, that nation deserves to have its progress checked and its liberties tampered with, for its lack of public spirit, of outspoken patriotism, and of proper organization.

A man of independent character, then, should not only form intelligent opinions on the current political questions of his country, but he ought to maintain those opinions fearlessly, until he sees solid grounds for changing or modifying them. He should allow himself to be guided or driven by the personal influence of no man, or to sell the privileges of his citizenship for no money or material consideration.

Independence of character is still more required in religious than in political discussions, because religion, when admitted at all, must be considered the transcendent duty of life. Athe-

ism and agnosticism are now so fashionable among young men that it requires much moral courage to defend revealed truth against them. It is necessary, also, to have the grounds of one's religious convictions clearly and satisfactorily established in one's own mind, in order to be able to present them with due force in reply to modern objections. Our adversaries will sneer at our faith as antiquated and behind the age; and they will cite the apostles of their new religion, as if the weight of their names should be sufficient to overwhelm us. Luther and Calvin were similarly cited in their day, and Voltaire and Rousseau in theirs, as if each spoke the last word and gave the death-blow to the old faith. Yet the old faith has survived them, while they themselves have been long since shelved for later apostles. The truth never changes; it is the same in all time. Error alone veers round and round with every new development of unguided reason.

No man of strong religious convictions should neglect to read the latest works in defence of Christian faith. But besides reading those works, he should, as I have said, be thoroughly grounded in the reasons and motives of his belief

and be able to express them in clear, forcible language when occasion requires it. It is not, indeed, the duty of a layman to initiate those religious controversies ; but when they are introduced by others, or when his Church is attacked, or when an outsider honestly seeks information or instruction from him—in either of these cases he should be prepared to give an account of the faith that is in him, and to show that his convictions are honest and well grounded.

It may seem at first sight that independence of character is incompatible with subjection to authority. On the contrary, no one respects or obeys authority more fully and conscientiously than the truly independent man. He recognizes divine Authority speaking in revelation, and he obeys it in the Commandments. He recognizes that same authority in its spiritual representative, the Church, in its civil representative, the State, and in its domestic representative, the head of the family ; and he respects and loves and obeys each of these representatives, within its own well-defined limits, not as a mere human institution, but as an earthly expression or manifestation of the supreme authority of the Creator.

But in what, then, does independence of char-

acter consist? It consists, first of all, in giving no man any innate power over us. What power he has is purely delegated, and delegated by the only principle of absolute authority we admit—the Being who brought us into existence, who maintains us in it, and to whom alone we owe unbounded fealty and obedience.

In the second place, a man of independent character resists all encroachments of one delegated power on another. He confines each within its own limits, and obeys it only within them, unless public order be seriously disturbed by resistance. For example, if the State interfere with the rights of the family, he regards the interference as an usurpation and a tendency to despotism, and he uses every legitimate means to defeat it. So, too, if the civil power interfere with the spiritual or the spiritual with the civil, he allows no servile respect for the one or the other to prevent him from raising his voice and exerting his influence to push back the aggressive party into its rightful place. All human authority has a tendency to absolutism, leading to endless mischief and confusion, unless it be checked either by its own prudence or by the fearless, independent action of the subject.

A third mark of an independent character is, that he suffers no dictation from unauthorized parties, and acknowledges no allegiance to them. I have spoken of this characteristic already ; but there is one matter suggested by it on which I have not touched. The newspaper has come to be an informal but real power in modern society. It rules public opinion, influences legislation, makes or unmakes cabinets ; it teaches everything, from cookery up to transcendental philosophy ; it punishes vice more severely than the strictest judge ; it is the most powerful defender of every struggling cause, the most determined opponent of oppression and wrong-doing, whether social or political.

Now, salutary and important as the general influence of the newspaper undoubtedly is, we must not allow it to do our thinking for us. We must not accept its philosophy or politics, or indeed any of its opinions or statements, without independent consideration and reflection on their merits. It would be unmanly and servile to do so ; and it would also tend to establish a degrading despotism among us. The newspaper is not above venal and other unworthy influences, although we may hope that it does not often

yield to them. We should therefore form our own judgments on subjects discussed in the press, deciding them on their intrinsic merits and not on the bare authority of the writer.

I may here remark that weakness and insincerity in religious and political principles is frequently shown by not patronizing the papers that advocate those principles. We are prone to undervalue what is our own, especially if it be not fashionable; and although we may defend it before outsiders, yet in private and among ourselves we treat it with contempt. A Catholic newspaper, for instance, is sometimes superseded in Catholic families by Protestant or agnostic prints. Various reasons may be alleged for the change; but whether they be weighty or worthless, they can never justify us in withholding our support from the organ of our Church and the advocate of our religious convictions. In fact, it is difficult to believe a man honest in his professions, whatever they be, who does not use every opportunity given him to support them, not by words alone, but by his purse and by every other reasonable sacrifice that may be demanded of him.

Another danger to independence of character

lies in some of the political, social, and labor organizations, in one or other of which most men of active lives are enlisted. In those organizations it is justifiable and laudable to pledge one's self to make sacrifices for a common object. Union is strength; and there is no solid union possible among men without each giving up something of his own will and judgment, and contributing material help to the common cause. But it sometimes happens, if those societies be not grossly slandered, that they interfere with the lawful rights and liberties of outsiders, and that they oblige their members to take a course of action, either individually or in a body, that is wrong in itself, and therefore unjustifiable by any amount of good accruing from it. How, then, can a man retain his self-respect and independence of character if he be forced by the combination to which he belongs to do to his neighbor what he would not wish his neighbor to do to himself? And yet how can he violate the laws which he has pledged himself to observe?

Moreover, it is said that members of those organizations incur most serious consequences by withdrawing themselves from incorporation in them. If this be so, a man should think long


and seriously before committing his freedom of action to such danger of being fettered or curtailed.

I have now but two other recommendations to make on the subject of this chapter, and I will make them in very few words. The first is: Live a blameless life, and maintain an unsullied character, if you value your independence. There is no servitude more galling than that which comes from the consciousness of having forfeited by our own actions the esteem and respect of our friends. Few in such circumstances have the hardihood, and perhaps I may say the bad taste, of taking a prominent part in local politics or social reforms.

The second recommendation I have to make is: Keep out of debt. Every creditor is to some extent a master, influencing your liberty of action in many important questions in which his views and interests clash with yours. Moreover, debt is dishonest, except in the ordinary course of commercial transactions. A man who lives beyond his means deceives the public, and does his utmost to convince it that he is better and greater than he really is. Such a life is false and hollow, and will have an unpleasant ending.

CHAPTER XVII.

KINDLINESS.

INDLINESS is the wisest and happiest disposition with which we can get through life. It seldom makes an enemy; but, on the contrary, it raises around us a host of friends, and every day we live adds to the number. Perhaps we cannot rely much on those friends in our most pressing need; but it is extremely pleasant to have them, and their goodwill is a valuable help in many contingencies.

Sweet words, a gushing, effusive manner, and insincere promises, often pass muster for real kindness. Their hollowness and hypocrisy, however, are detected sooner or later, and create disgust, not only in those duped by them, but in all right-minded men. I think there are few characters more repulsive than a selfish, crafty man beaming with smiles and professing world-wide philanthropy. Let his friends, if he have any, beware of such a man; for he will betray them if they commit themselves to his power.

True kindness must spring from a thorough

conviction of the claims which our fellow-beings have on our love, and sympathy, and help. We are members of one family, of which God is the Father and Chief. In that family He does not wish us to live wrapped up in ourselves, as if each were the most important object in the universe. He wishes us to be helpful to others, and to share in their burdens as a brother or sister each helps the other in our private homes. Of course we are not obliged to hold our property in common with our neighbor, or to straiten ourselves in order to relieve his wants, unless they be exceptionally pressing. But there is a large field for benevolence between sordid parsimony and lavish dissipation of wealth. There are those in our employment, or with whom we live, whom we can cheer and help by kindly words and deeds. There are the poor, the widow, the orphan, the old and helpless, whose lives are entrusted to our keeping, and whose unhappy condition we can brighten at a trivial sacrifice. There are those in sorrow or trouble whose grateful attachment we can secure by a visit or a letter of condolence. There are those under a cloud of shame or disgrace, merited or unmerited, against whom every face is turned and every door is closed. Can we not let in a little sunshine on those out-

cast brothers of ours by treating them with gentle compassion, by softening men's minds toward them, by giving them a helping hand and a hearty God-speed on their desolate way?

Most people are disposed to kindliness in theory; but in practice they draw a line beyond which they allow themselves any amount of unmerciful harshness. They scowl on an able-bodied man asking help, just as if it were out of the question that an able-bodied man could be hungry or have hungry ones depending on him. They have no pity on a starving wretch who has beggared himself by drink, as if his vicious habits had cut him off from all claims on their humanity. They are lavish in their help of genteel poverty—poverty that “saw better days,” and even still wears frayed silk and kid gloves. But every-day poverty, with soiled hands, and shoeless feet, and tattered dress—this has nothing attractive or picturesque to interest them, and so they regard it as a tiresome nuisance, unworthy of a kindly look or word, and separated by an impassable gulf from the higher order of social life to which they belong.

“But what would you have us do?” some one asks impatiently. “You do not mean that we should go about shaking hands with all the

tramps and roughs we meet ; that we should set a premium by indiscriminate charity on laziness, extravagance, and drunkenness ; that we should treat with the same kindness the sullen, thankless, professional beggar as the man who will starve rather than hold out his hand for alms, and who seeks to cloak his poverty from the public gaze by keeping up a respectable appearance ?”

I certainly do not mean that there should be no distinction made between poor and poor, or that equal kindness and help should be extended to all cases of distress. But I do mean that no case deserves harsh language such as is often used to the waifs and strays that occasionally wander to our doors. No scolding or preaching, however well meant, will convert a drunkard. A kind, encouraging word and a good meal will do more to set him on his feet than if we overwhelmed his dazed mind with all the arguments against drink ever used on temperance platforms. Let us be tolerant of the errors and mistakes of life. We ourselves commit many, and we should commit more were we exposed as much as others to danger and temptation. Even vice has a side that should excite human pity ; and at its worst,

it is not our office to judge or condemn those who have fallen into it.

No doubt, benevolent people are very liable to be deceived by trumped-up stories of destitution. In large cities many persons live comfortably for years on the proceeds of their appeals to the charitable. The deserving poor are frequently exposed to a great deal of unkind treatment on account of such swindling. No one wishes to be laughed at as the dupe of designing knaves ; so when once deceived, he is disposed to treat future appeals for help with scant sympathy. He not only inquires into their merits, as he has a right to do, but he investigates minutely the past history of the applicant ; and if he find a dark spot anywhere in it, he at once pronounces him beyond the pale of his benevolence. This mode of proceeding is scarcely considerate or humane. If a brother-man be in real distress we ought to relieve him, no matter how worthless he may be or how recklessly he may have lived. A kind word or deed is sometimes the turning-point in a downward career. At the least, it is treasured up in the memory of the poor unfortunate out-cast, and gives him something kind and gentle to think of in his after-life.

The happiest and most enviable lives I have known in my experience were those of men who never allowed themselves to become hardened by deception or crookedness. Their warm-hearted, generous natures overflowed with kindly words and actions, often abused and turned to ungrateful uses, but overflowing still, like a fountain that no amount of waste could exhaust. The world sometimes laughs at such men and prophesies their failure in business and their social ruin. But they keep their heads above water nevertheless, and seem to prosper by their unselfishness. Their unshaken belief and confidence in human goodness are justified by the result. By trusting men they make them trustworthy; they bring out their better nature; and they accumulate happiness for themselves in the happiness they are constantly diffusing around them.

The world, with all its good-natured laughter at those men, gives them a high place in its esteem and affection. Its views of life are purified and elevated by their influence; and although it does not throw away its idols and fetishes, it is brought to understand that they are not the omnipotent deities it had believed them to be, and that there is a brighter, happier, nobler world than any they can create.

Kindliness is tried not only by deception, but also by misrepresentation and insult. Here is a man, for instance, of a genial, effusive nature, who seems to have got a freehold of the sunny side of life, and who has a smile and a pleasant word for every one he meets. Well, his popularity excites the envy of some sour-tempered, cross-grained neighbors of his, and they take a malicious pleasure in attributing to his conduct motives of which he is incapable. He wishes to get some public office or appointment; he wishes to attract customers; he is vain and wishes to surround himself with flatterers. Those misrepresentations may cause pain to a sensitive man; but if he be wise he will disregard them, as they injure only those who concoct them. No right-minded person whose good opinion is worth having can help admiring a generous, kindly deed; and with their admiration the man who performs it can afford to treat with a compassionate smile the impotent attacks of the envious and spiteful.

One of the chief characteristics of kindliness, then, is to make ample allowance for the shortcomings of those we serve, and even for the malice of those who would misrepresent and vilify our motives. Another characteristic equally im-

portant is uniformity. People of kindly disposition are frequently variable and uncertain in temperament. They have their bright days and their dark days; their seasons of gladness and their seasons of depression; their likings and their dislikings; their favorites and their bugbears. I need not say that this fickleness detracts considerably from all the good that kindliness would otherwise effect. It is, indeed, only a superficial flaw on the character; but yet it spoils the beauty and symmetry of an otherwise amiable and complete life, and leaves behind it an unpleasant feeling of disquiet and unhappiness.

To avoid this want of uniformity in our kindly demeanor to others, we ought to learn to regulate our conduct by principle and not by impulse. I do not mean that a good and noble impulse should not be acted on, because it undoubtedly should be. But as it depends very much on our physical constitution, it should be accompanied and guided by some rational or religious principle, which should supply its place when it has died out or has become too weak to influence us.

I now come to speak of kindliness as an essential element of domestic happiness. I have spoken already of the necessity of making our

homes as cheerful and attractive as possible, and I now say that the chief means of doing so is kindness. Parents and children usually entertain a kindly feeling toward each other; but for one reason or another they frequently cloak it under a gruff, unpleasant manner. They seem ashamed of the slightest display of tenderness or cordiality; and when they speak to outsiders they never have a kind word to say of their own homes or families. It may be said that this disagreeable demeanor comes from natural modesty and reserve. If so, there can be little said against it; but I hardly think that modesty or reserve has anything to do with it. I am disposed to attribute it, at least in its beginning, to the imprudence of parents who quarrel with each other in the presence of their children. These soon learn to quarrel among themselves without fear of parental authority, which they despise. The home thus becomes a pandemonium, without charm or attraction for any of its members.

Parents, then, should be most careful never to show any disunion, and never to use rude language to each other, before their children. The observance of this rule is the key to the secret of domestic happiness. When father and mother are united in the government of their household,

and when they treat each other with courtesy and respect, their children will naturally follow their example, and there will be no bickering, no assumption of airs, no murmuring or discontent in their home.

A very considerable help to the union and happiness of families is the careful observance of the social courtesies of refined life. These are unfortunately often disregarded except in the presence of visitors; and the consequence is, that both parents and children drift imperceptibly into a careless, chilling deportment towards each other. This slight division easily develops into a wider and deeper breach, until the unity of the home is destroyed, and its members live together like boarders in a hotel.


Some parents, especially fathers, although not wanting in affection for their children, have a chilling, stand-off manner toward them. They feel as if they cannot unbend before them or show them the slightest token of endearment. The little ones grow up morally unhealthy under such treatment, as plants from which the sunshine is excluded. Home looks bright and happy only when father is away. On his return he brings a cloud over all their gayety. Their merry laughter, their innocent prattle, their

noisy, unrestrained fun are all hushed; and they resign themselves with long, gruesome faces to a life of misery until business or some lucky accident calls him away again. When those children grow up, what pleasant memories of home and youth will they have to look back to and to cherish, as a relief and an inspiration amid the cares and anxieties of life? And what happiness can such a father have in his children? He loves them, and he has but one earthly object—to provide for their comfort. But what return can he reasonably expect from them? When they will have homes of their own, and he will be past his work, will they make him welcome to their firesides, will they surround him with affectionate attentions, will they make his end calm and bright and beautiful as an autumn sunset? It is barely possible that they may do all this; but it is wisest to make sure of their doing it by securing their childish love; by making it grow with their growth; by surrounding it with every possible safeguard of esteem, and respect, and obedience.

In one word, then, a kindly deportment to their children is the surest and wisest provision parents can make for the comfort and happiness of their declining years.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MENTAL CULTURE.

NOWLEDGE perfects the mind. We should, therefore, aim at acquiring during life as much of it as lies within our reach. School and college education is for the most part a preparation for further mental culture; and it loses much of its utility if it do not inspire us with a determination to continue our studies in after-life as far as our duties will permit. Yet how very few, after leaving school, ever think of taking up a book of science, a history, a work of solid literary worth, and studying it at those odds and ends of time when they have no other serious occupation. How very few keep up even the elementary knowledge of useful subjects acquired in the class-room at a heavy sacrifice of time and labor and money. Ask a young man who started in business a few years ago some simple question in history or geography, and I

fear he will admit with an ill grace that he has forgotten most of his school-book knowledge.

I do not, of course, recommend that a business man should be a bookworm, or that he should keep his school-books beside him on his desk and con them over at every spare moment. I do not even say that a man should devote his evenings and other free time to severe studies, unless they be intimately connected with his trade or profession and he take the same pleasure in them as another takes in a novel or a newspaper. What I wish to insist on is this: that we take an exalted view of our responsibility for every faculty we possess; that we resolve to train it to its utmost capacity; that the mind or intellect being among the most important of those faculties, we never lose sight of the duty of storing it with useful, accurate knowledge. This, like every other natural duty of ours, is accompanied with a feeling of pleasure that makes it easy and attractive. It raises us above grovelling, sensuous pursuits, and it keeps us abreast of our age in all its discoveries and inventions, as well as in its marvellous social and scientific developments. It gives us, too, an honored place among people of refinement and culture, not, perhaps, as profound scholars,

but as men who appreciate the mental gifts with which they are endowed, and who spare no effort in bringing them to their highest perfection.

But perhaps mental culture is possible only to those who have gone through a complete college course? No; it is possible to every one who has learned to read. There are manuals of self-instruction within the reach and comprehension of every one published nowadays on every possible subject. Reprints of cyclopedias and of historical works may be obtained at trifling prices, and supply abundance of profitable reading for years, even to those whose early education had been most meagre and elementary. No one with a sincere love of knowledge and an earnest desire of acquiring it can complain in our day of the lack of opportunities for gratifying this praiseworthy ambition. The nineteenth century has achieved at least one magnificent triumph, for which, in the ages to come, its history deserves to be written in golden letters. It has brought education to the door of the poor, and thrown open the fairy-like treasure-rooms of science and art and literature for the free enjoyment of all. It now remains for the people to profit by the splendid opportunities supplied them, and to make those

opportunities stepping-stones to a higher, purer, holier life.

Young men fresh from school or college and starting in life could scarcely take a wiser resolution than to devote some little time every day to self-instruction in some useful branch of knowledge. When they will have once begun to do so they will find the practice so pleasant that they will be in no danger of leaving it off for any less worthy occupation. They need not, however, give all their free time to it; and perhaps it is better not to do so. Young people require fresh air and healthful bodily exercise; and if their business confine them indoors during the day they would act very imprudently to rush to their rooms when they come home in the evening and bury themselves in their books until bed-time. I do not anticipate, however, that many of my young readers will be in much danger of falling into this excess.

Half an hour or, at most, an hour will be ample time to give every day to this work of self-improvement I recommend. Even a shorter period, indeed, will suffice, provided it be given regularly, and not by fits and starts. But here lies the great danger and stumbling-block to good reso-

lutions. They are made in good faith and with a certain glow of pleasure and self-approbation. In carrying them out, however, we are apt to find them irksome, and to invent some excuse for setting them aside. The excuse in many cases is soon forthcoming, and the resolutions are thrown to the winds. To provide against this result, we ought to cultivate firmness of will until it becomes a distinctive feature of our character. We ought to be slow in binding ourselves to any self-imposed duty ; and before doing so, we ought to weigh well all the obstacles that are likely to interfere with our fulfilment of it. But when we have once bound ourselves, we should allow no motive of convenience or interest to prevent us from carrying out to the letter the resolution we have taken.

Before engaging in any other branch of study we should make ourselves perfect masters of everything that can be learned from books regarding our own trade or profession. We should learn its history, its development, its present condition and future prospects. We should be familiar with its theoretic or speculative, as well as with its practical, side ; and be intimately acquainted with its latest literature and with the newest lights thrown on it.

We have, however, such a passion for novelty, and we grow so tired of the old and familiar, that I fear many of us will be inclined to engage in fresher and more interesting studies than those just recommended. We may think, perhaps, that we know all about our business sufficiently well without need of further study; and we may reason very plausibly that a work taken up voluntarily, as a kind of recreation, ought not to be made a burdensome task. Certainly it ought not; but why do we consider anything intimately connected with our position in life a task? Why are we not anxious, of our own free will, to learn every detail of our business? The reason is because we are not engrossed in it, and we have not that absorbing love of it of which I spoke in a preceding chapter as an essential condition of success. Let us make the special work in which we are engaged our first and dearest consideration, and we shall urge no excuse for neglecting to study it in all its bearings and connections. We may indeed take an interest in other branches of knowledge and make time to devote to them; but we will not allow them to draw away our attention from the study which is of primary importance and which gains us a foremost place in

the ranks of our fellow-workmen—the exhaustive study of our craft or profession.

I come now to make some practical suggestions on the subjects to be studied and the manner of studying them for mental culture. Many persons adopt the excellent practice of “reading up” any event of current interest, and learning all about the actors in it, the place where it occurred, the time of its occurrence, the causes that led to it, its effects or influence, etc., etc. Those persons acquire in this way, after a few years, a vast amount of miscellaneous and interesting knowledge; and their conversation, if tempered with modesty, is most enjoyable and instructive. They elevate the tone of any society they frequent; they keep table-talk from being vapid and commonplace. They stimulate their listeners to more accurate study of current events. In a word, they exercise a most healthy influence within the circle of their acquaintances.

For ordinary men of the world, I think this kind of knowledge, with all its drawbacks, is the most useful as well as the most easily acquired. The pleasure of imparting it to others acts as a constant stimulus to earnestness in collecting it; so that when they have once formed the habit of

this kind of study there is little danger of their throwing it aside.

An extensive library, however, and free access to the most recent publications are required by those who wish to have something new and interesting to say on current topics. Many newspapers, indeed, give useful help in their leading articles ; but it will be found that their information very often presupposes knowledge in the reader that he may possess in a confused way, but that he must verify by reference to books if he wish to avoid error and establish a character for accurate information. Now, libraries are not always within the reach of those who would wish to use them ; and the most recent works are too expensive for any except the wealthiest class of readers. Besides, there are many who do not ambition to shine in conversation, and who prefer to gain a profound and exhaustive knowledge of one subject than to skim lightly over several.

For those people the supply of matter for study is almost unlimited. Science and literature open up to them two fields equally accessible and extensive. No doubt their early training or the natural bent of their minds will lead them to

select some special subject ; and they cannot do better than to devote themselves to that subject until they have mastered it thoroughly. I must say, however, that the study of history or biography seems to me the most practically useful, not only for the cultivation of the mind, but also for the formation of a noble, high-souled character. We have presented to us there life-like types of the highest perfection man has reached in the past. Patriotism, integrity, purity, self-sacrifice, intolerance of oppression, sympathy with the oppressed—these are lessons taught us by history in the highest form of word-painting, the words being the lives of men who achieved greatness and fame out of the same material as we possess in ourselves.

But if profane history teaches these lessons, the history of the Church teaches still higher and nobler ones. It reveals to us the dignity of the human soul for whose redemption God deigned to die. It gives us the most sublime examples of heroism in the myriads of martyrs who faced death unflinchingly in testimony of their faith in Christ and in imitation of His example. It shows us men and women renouncing their possessions, their homes and home-ties, and devoting them-

selves to lives of poverty and prayer and work among the poor and outcast of society, for the love of Him who, possessing all things, was born and lived among the poor, and died an outcast in the world He had come to save.

However, it is not my purpose here to influence your choice in the selection of a subject. The main object I have before me will be attained if you determine to give uniformly some little time every day to any subject by which your mind will be gradually stored with useful knowledge and raised above the level of a sensuous, animal life.

I need scarcely caution you against being satisfied with a cursory knowledge of whatever subject you take up. Anything that is worth learning at all should be learned thoroughly. In truth, knowledge that is not accurate should be classed with ignorance rather than with knowledge, as it holds a middle place between the two, leaning, however, more to the former than to the latter. Do not take credit to yourself for knowing anything unless you can give an account of it to yourself or others in clear, precise language. Tried by this test, many persons of extensive reading and of high literary or scientific pre-

tensions would be found to know very little in reality.

Another caution : Guard against being proud of your intellectual powers or acquirements. The brightest and most profound scholar is forced to admit the narrow limits circumscribing his search after truth. Science has made marvelous conquests in modern times ; but compared with the vast regions of the unknown and undiscovered those conquests dwindle to a point of light amid universal darkness. An insect crawling to the tip of a blade of grass may as justly pride itself on its knowledge of the whole earth as we from our highest standpoint may boast of having mastered universal truth.

If mental culture make us reverent and humble in presence of the unfathomed mysteries around us, and if it strengthen our faith in revelation as the only solution of those vital questions bearing on the origin, duties, and end of life, it will have achieved its highest purpose, and we may trust that divine light will not be wanting to guide us to salvation.

CHAPTER XIX.

LIFE SPIRITUALIZED.



MOST of the advice given you in the preceding chapters is directed to make you upright, respected, and successful in whatever sphere of life you move. This is an end which every one is justified in putting before him and striving to secure. But it is not an end which by itself can satisfy him or make him happy. He longs for something beyond and above the mere endowments or acquirements of nature, however perfect they be ; and no peace of heart is possible to him until he has learned what that something is, and how it is to be obtained.

Perhaps you may say: "Oh! I should be quite contented if I had abundance of wealth, a handsome dwelling with a large retinue of servants, all my friends around me, good health, and a stainless reputation. Beyond these things I would long for nothing."

Yes, you would. You can scarcely bring yourself to think it possible ; but you would long that you might be able to possess these things forever, and you would, after a little enjoyment of them, long that they would be increased. These are two circumstances connected with all sublunary possessions, which render them incapable of fully satisfying the human soul. Those possessions are limited in their extent and limited in their duration ; whereas the soul's longing aspires to something that can never be lost, and beyond which there is nothing to desire. This something is God, revealed to us by our Christian faith as the Source from which we spring and the End in which we are to rest. Hence, when we strive after moral uprightness we must have in view, not alone the perfection of our natural state, but our preparation for that supernatural life of union with God, which is the primary object and ultimate term of our being.

So, too, with respectability of character and success in business. We must make them secondary and subsidiary to the one great purpose of our lives—rounds of the ladder by which we ascend to God. It may be thought that this higher view of life will make us less devoted to

business, less interested in the material progress of our race, less fitted to hold our own in the sharp competition around us. But these results are connected with an earnest Christian life only in the imagination of shallow thinkers. On the contrary, prudent, steady attention to business, on which success mainly depends, is enjoined as a conscientious duty in the Christian moral code. In the same code, too, brotherly love, implying help, sympathy, and union, is insisted on as an essential condition of gaining eternal life. Thus to the motive of self-interest or philanthropy actuating others the earnest Christian joins the far higher motive of duty, in his transactions of business and his dealings with his fellow-men. It cannot therefore be asserted with any foundation of truth that a religious view of life is liable to check a successful business career, or to retard the world's progress in material development and prosperity.

But even though these or worse results were to follow, the duty of going straight forward to our destined end would remain still the same. A merchant in a storm at sea does not hesitate to throw his heavy bales overboard in order to save his life. So, too, if we were assured by divine

revelation that to gain eternal life it is necessary to give up all things and to renounce all intercourse with our fellow-men, we should not hesitate an instant to relinquish the lesser for the greater good. No such sacrifice, however, is imposed on us : "If thou wilt enter into life," says Jesus Christ, "keep the commandments." Some few, indeed, He calls to a higher life. "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven : and come, follow Me." But these are cases of counsel, not of precept, and therefore they have no bearing on the question at issue.

If we wish, then, to enjoy peace of soul and whatever solid happiness this life permits, if we wish to sanctify our work without foregoing the material advantages accruing from it, we must keep our eyes fixed steadily on our last end and do everything with special reference to it. I do not believe that any of us will find this duty irksome or unpleasant. It will not interfere with our business. It will not prevent us from enjoying ourselves when our day's work is done. It will not make home less pleasant ; nor will it estrange our friends, nor make our lives morose and miserable. Between you who have chosen

“the best part,” and another who has not chosen it, there are only these two points of difference: you are on your guard against sin, he is indifferent to it; you intend by your work to please God and to be united with Him, the other intends to please himself or his employer. Before the world both your lives are very much alike; it is only interiorly, in their spiritual aspect, they differ; but the difference is incalculable.

This supernatural end for which we are bound to labor throws a new light on the passions which we have hitherto considered chiefly in their material bearing on the success or failure of our lives. Such is our intense craving for happiness, as the perfection and end of our being, that we are constantly tempted to seek that happiness in the indulgence of our passions. Whenever we yield to any serious extent to that indulgence we swerve from the straight course marked out by the Commandments, and we withdraw ourselves voluntarily from the divine light and help that are given only to those who follow that course. Moreover, we make our return to it impossible except by a special mercy of God, on which we have no right to presume. Hence our passions are our most serious enemies; and if

we are wise we will keep constant watch over them, so that they may not lead us to excess.

I mention excess designedly to provide against the mistake of thinking the passions wholly bad and sinful. Nothing bad or sinful could have been given to us by our Creator; and therefore the passions must have some wise purpose to serve in the economy of our lives. That purpose is to stimulate us to activity and earnestness, and to give a natural zest to those actions on which the preservation of the individual and of the race depends. The passions, then, are merely means to an end and must be used only as far as they promote it. We use salt at table to season our food and perhaps make it more digestible; but we never think of dining exclusively on it. Now, it is quite as preposterous to dine exclusively on that or any other condiment as to live on the indulgence of a passion. Yet how many do we see attempting this latter feat—trying to find food for the hunger of the soul in intemperance, impurity, or some other predominant passion. The spiritual life dies out of such men. Their state becomes bestial in its guiding principle of sensuality. Beyond the grave they have no hope, although they have a chilling fear of

terrible retribution, a fear that overshadows them in their wildest excesses and haunts them through their sleepless nights, and makes the approach of death appear to them infinitely more appalling than the coming of a thunder-storm on a bleak, unsheltered highway.

As we wish, then, to attain our supreme end,—rest in God and eternal happiness,—we must keep our passions under strict control and confine them to the uses for which they are given to us. But have we moral strength to do this? Is the natural will sufficiently strong to resist the temptations and allurements to sensuality and pride that we feel within us and see around us? Are the purely human motives of self-respect, of regard for the esteem and favor of men, and of self-interest, able to keep our lives pure and upright, without any extrinsic or supernatural help? No; the human will was so wounded in the fall of our first parents that the passions outgrow it in strength and usurp its authority, unless divine grace be called in to check them and maintain them in subjection. We are no doubt perfectly free in every individual temptation to resist or to consent. But without supernatural light and strength the will seldom sees any adequate mo-

tive to determine it to exercise what powers of resistance it has ; and so the passions usually gain an easy victory.

I think our own experience will convince us sufficiently of the necessity of divine help to conquer temptation, especially when it is violent and persistent. We may, indeed, never experience some temptations, and education or refinement or natural fear or shame may counteract others. There is also a certain period of life when the passions seem to become torpid and to lose their power to injure us. Making due allowance for all these exceptions, and putting them aside, we must recognize, I think, the want of help, outside our natural strength of will, to keep us, interiorly and exteriorly, morally pure and upright.

This help is actual grace, given us by divine Mercy through prayer and the sacraments. But it serves another purpose besides that of help : it raises the actions performed under its influence in the state of grace to a supernatural level, gives them supernatural merit, and earns for them a supernatural reward. Without it we can never turn towards God. In fact, as I have stated already, the supernatural life which we are bound to lead is dead in us without sanctifying

grace, and we are utterly incapable of resuscitating it, unless a special interior help from God move the intellect and will to perform those supernatural acts by which it is restored. These acts are chiefly Faith, Hope, Love, Contrition, and Penance.

You need not dread that I am about to inflict on you a long dissertation on grace. The foregoing remarks, however, are absolutely necessary to show you, first, that we cannot curb our passions, cannot keep temperate or chaste, cannot practise strict honesty or truthfulness under violent temptation, without special help from God. Secondly, we see that without like help we cannot rise out of sin, or take a single step toward heaven, or even perform the slightest work meritorious of a supernatural reward. How, then, are we to obtain this all-important help? We always obtain it through prayer and the sacraments, particularly the sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist. A few words on each of these spiritual means of grace will not be out of place here.

The Christian doctrine regarding prayer is, that whatever we ask the Father in the name of Jesus Christ will be granted to us. There is no con-

dition attached to this promise—and there is none to be put except what arises from its very nature. We must ask things conducive to our final end, and we must ask them with confidence and with patience and perseverance. Very few receive what they ask for in prayer the first time they ask for it. The reason seems to be either that they have not sufficient confidence, or that their patience needs to be strengthened by frequent practice. In fact, they receive, unconsciously, a higher gift than that which they ask for, in the perseverance with which they continue their prayer. That perseverance is a hopeful sign of their predestination, and is among the most precious graces of God.

Even temporal blessings may be the object of our prayers. We may ask for health of mind or body; for relief from poverty, distress of mind, or impending evil; in a word, for anything of which we stand in need. Provided any of these favors be conducive to our salvation, we may ask for it with the same confidence as for some spiritual gift, and it will be given to us. Some foolish people think that prayer cannot interfere with the natural order of the universe. Now, what we call the natural order of the universe is simply

the manifestation of God's way of dealing with His own creation. What determines that way is a mystery to us ; but if He assures us that He is influenced in it by prayer, it is impious to deny His word or to dispute His power of interfering as He wills with His own work.

The habit of prayer is no burden to any one ; for we can pray worthily at any time, in any place, and in any posture. Even the motion of the lips is not necessary ; the mind and heart can be engaged in it while we read or converse or go about our daily work. Moreover, prayer produces a delicious feeling of hope and rest in God ; and this feeling is worth more than all the happiness that wealth can purchase or the world give.

The sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist are two other means by which life is spiritualized and prepared for its entrance into eternity. When grace is lost by sin, Jesus Christ has purchased by His death a means whereby it is restored. That means is Penance. No matter how many or how great our sins may be, provided they be repented of with sincerity and confessed honestly to a priest, they are fully forgiven, and shall never be brought in judgment against us. In addition, we are reinstated in the divine

favor, and have our forfeited inheritance of eternal happiness restored to us. How stupid and miserable it is to carry about with us a guilty conscience, when by going to the nearest Catholic church and performing the easy conditions prescribed we could get relieved from our weary burden and recover our lost peace of mind !

To pardon our sins and restore the divine friendship to us were infinitely more than we had any right to expect. Yet Jesus Christ goes further, and comes, His very Self, into our souls in the Blessed Eucharist, to make the spiritual life received in Penance more vigorous and active, and to give us a pledge of the reward in store for us if we do our work here faithfully and well. "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life : and I will raise him up on the last day."

CHAPTER XX.

WHY WE BELIEVE.



CATHOLIC laymen have great need of being thoroughly grounded in the many convincing reasons they have for accepting the authority of the Church, when it teaches them what they are to believe and do to spiritualize their lives and to attain their end. To safeguard themselves against anxiety and doubt, they ought to be prepared with clear, satisfactory answers to the many objections against religion that crop up every day in their reading and conversation. Besides, they should be able to clear away the difficulties experienced by candid but ill-instructed and prejudiced minds in accepting the teaching of the Church and entering its communion. It would be difficult to overstate the amount of good that can be done by the Catholic layman who, with a firm grasp of the principles which guide reason to the threshold of

faith, is zealous in propounding those principles at every fitting opportunity.

We believe the revealed truths taught us by the Church solely on the authority of God, who revealed them. This divine authority is the exclusive motive of our faith. Our reason is convinced that God has spoken to men, and that His words have come down to us uncorrupted and unmutilated. We therefore feel obliged to give our fullest assent to everything He has said. We put aside our human experience and knowledge when it seems to conflict with His teaching, somewhat as a child puts aside its crude ideas of the solar system and the stars when it has studied astronomy. We feel no uneasiness at the progress of science, because the Author of revelation is the Author of nature also ; and being essential Truth, His teaching through both cannot be irreconcilable. Indeed, it would be infinitely more rational to fear a contradiction between the axioms of pure mathematics and the discoveries of geology than to anticipate the possibility of science ever disproving a single truth of divine revelation. Human knowledge and faith are two rays of light coming from the same source, each having its own special mission and end, and, in-

stead of thwarting or neutralizing the other, helping it to guide the soul to the attainment of its destiny.

I said above that reason is convinced of God having spoken to men, and of His words having come down to us uncorrupted and unmutilated. It is an historical fact that the Catholic Church is a living body called into existence by Jesus Christ, and appointed by Him to continue His mission of salvation to the world down to the end of time. It is also an historical fact that the Catholic Church has never failed to fulfil that divine mission. She has been preaching to the nations of the earth in a clear, consistent, authoritative voice for nearly nineteen centuries ; and during that time her principles have been the same, her government has been the same, her organization for dispensing grace has been the same, in every age and in every country. They are the same here in America as they are in India ; the same to-day as they were when the Apostles dispersed to evangelize the world.

Moreover, the Catholic Church has been distinguished throughout her course by three characteristic qualities which must very much strengthen her authority with all thinking men.

She has cast her lot with the poor, as should be expected of the true Church of Christ; her teaching and direction have produced the most heroic, self-sacrificing sanctity known to the world; and her zeal for the salvation of mankind has never been checked by any obstacle and has never flinched in the face of persecution or death.

Here, then, we have living among us an eye-witness of the preaching, and miracles, and death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But she is not merely an eye-witness. She is the authorized agent and representative of Jesus Christ in the world, and her past history is ample proof of the title.

Hence, if God has spoken to the world through Jesus Christ, His words have come down to us uncorrupted and unmutilated in the teaching of the Catholic Church. Any one who reads the New Testament with a candid, unprejudiced mind will surely be convinced that God has so spoken. Jesus Christ proved by His prophecies and miracles, but especially by His resurrection from the dead, that He was God Himself, made manifest to the world in His assumed human form. His teaching, summarized in personal holiness, brotherly love, and union with God, is proved to be

divine by its very sublimity and by the echo it finds in every truth-seeking heart. But as the clearness of this proof depends somewhat on the dispositions of each individual soul, we have the sanctity of His own life, His miracles, His disinterestedness, His sacrifice of Himself—all combining to convince us beyond every rational doubt that His words are the genuine revelation of God.

Human reason, then, shows us that God has spoken to us by His Son, and that what He has spoken has come down to us through the teaching of the Church in its original, genuine form. Were we free from passion and prejudice, and were the teaching of Jesus Christ easy and pleasant to practise, and, perhaps above all, were there no mysteries before which our understanding has to prostrate itself, we should require no supernatural help to arrive at these conclusions. Such help, however, is morally necessary for every step we take towards Christian faith. Reason is too diffident of its own conclusions, and the will is too weak and too much dominated by the passions, to take the initiative step towards the higher life of grace without supernatural assistance. That assistance, however, is always given

to those who do what lies within their power. It is given to the understanding by the clearer light in which it sees the reasonableness of belief; and to the will by the strength with which it puts aside human considerations to accept implicitly the guidance of divine revelation.

We thus see that the grace of light and help is morally necessary to bring us to the threshold of Christian faith. Our next step, however, by which we are raised to the supernatural state and begin to breathe the atmosphere of the supernatural life, is as far beyond our power as it is in a dead man to rise and walk. The transition is a second birth, and must be the work of the Holy Spirit breathing upon us and calling us into new life. "No man," says the Divine Teacher, "can come to Me, except the Father, who hath sent Me, draw him." And in another place He assures us that, "unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Hence, Christian faith is a pure gift of divine Mercy, merited for us by the death of Jesus Christ. It is "the beginning of our salvation, the foundation and the root of our justification." This faith is, moreover, a most consoling assurance to us that He who has begun in us the good

work of our sanctification will continue it to its completion. God wills all men to be saved; but to none does He manifest that will more visibly and unmistakably than to those whom He has led into the Church or whom He is leading thither by supernatural lights.

We should, then, guard with extreme care the gift of faith when we have got it. It is the most valuable treasure we can possess, infinitely above gold or jewels or broad lands or world-wide fame. When faith is accompanied by its sister-gifts of hope and charity, it makes us, in a true sense not always realized, the adopted children and heirs of God, the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, the companions of the saints. It makes all things co-operate to our good. It makes earth a stepping-stone to heaven. It brightens the darkest life, because it shows the goal so near and the untold, endless bliss beyond.

Some nominal Catholics seem to consider their faith an inalienable inheritance. They take all kinds of liberties with it, abuse it, expose it to every possible danger, even doubt or deny its truth; and still they think they do not forfeit their right to it and can win it back at pleasure.

They are very much mistaken. As I have shown above, no man has power to enter the supernatural life. We may leave it of our own will ; but when once outside, we cannot return unless God take pity on us as we lie prostrate in tears outside the gate. The nominal Catholic, however, sees no necessity of shedding tears. He has no thought of repentance for his doubt or rejection of some article of faith, as long as he has not joined an heretical communion. He makes himself quite comfortable in a fool's paradise, hoping to serve his natural inclinations during life, and to turn to God on his death-bed. Such conversions are rare and unreliable.

One great danger to which the faith of Catholics in this country is exposed is the general diffusion of anti-Catholic literature among them. On this point I believe no words of mine could be so prudent and persuasive as those of the Pastoral Letter of the Third Council of Baltimore. I therefore transcribe them here in full.

“4. *Good Reading*.—Let the adornments of home be chaste and holy pictures, and, still more, sound, interesting, and profitable books. No indelicate representation should ever be tolerated in a Christian home. Artistic merit in the

work is no excuse for the danger thus presented. No child ought to be subjected to temptation by its own parents and in its own home. But let the walls be beautified with what will keep the inmates in mind of our divine Lord, and of His saints, and with such other pictures of the great and good as will be incentives to civic and religious virtue.


“The same remark applies equally to books and periodicals. Not only should the immoral, the vulgar, the sensational novel, the indecently illustrated newspaper, and publications tending to weaken faith in the religion and the Church of Jesus Christ, be absolutely excluded from every Christian home, but the dangerously exciting and morbidly emotional,—whatever, in a word, is calculated to impair or lower the tone of faith or morals in the youthful mind and heart,—should be carefully banished. Parents would be sure to warn and withhold their children from anything that would poison or sicken their bodies; let them be at least as watchful against whatever could poison their souls. Let the family bookshelves be well supplied with what is both pleasant and wholesome. Happily, the store of Catholic literature, as well as works which, though

not written by Catholics nor treating of religion, are pure, instructive, and elevating, is now so large that there can be no excuse for running risk or wasting one's time with what is inferior, tainted, or suspicious. Remember, Christian parents, that the development of the Christian character is intimately connected with the development of the taste for reading. Of books as well as of associations may be held the wise saying: 'Show me your company and I will tell you what you are.' See, then, that none but good books and newspapers, as well as none but good companions, be admitted to your homes. Train your children to a love of history and biography. Inspire them with the ambition to become so well acquainted with the history and doctrines of the Church as to be able to give an intelligent answer to every inquirer. Should their surroundings call for it, encourage them, as they grow older, to acquire such knowledge of popularly mooted questions of a scientific or philosophical character as will suffice to make them firm in their faith and proof against sophistry. We should be glad to see thoroughly solid and popular works on these important subjects from able Catholic writers become more numerous

Teach your children to take a special interest in the history of our own country. We consider the establishment of our country's independence, the shaping of its liberties and laws, as a work of special Providence, its framers 'building better than they knew,' the Almighty's hand guiding them. And if ever the glorious fabric be subverted or impaired, it will be by men forgetful of the sacrifices of the heroes that reared it, of the virtues that cemented it, and of the rights on which it rests; or ready to sacrifice principle and virtue to the interests of party or self. As we desire, therefore, that the history of the United States should be carefully taught in all our Catholic schools, and have directed that it be specially dwelt upon in the education of ecclesiastical students in our preparatory seminaries, so also we desire that it form a favorite part of the home library and of home reading. We must keep firm and solid the liberties of our country, by keeping fresh the noble memories of the past, and by sending forth continually from our Catholic homes into the arena of public life recruits of patriots and not of partisans."

CHAPTER XXI.

LOYALTY TO THE CHURCH.

E loyal to the Church ; thank God frequently for bringing you into her communion ; believe no calumny that would dishonor her ; stand up and speak out manfully for her when she is slighted or slandered in your hearing. You would not hang your head and remain silent if your mother's or sister's name were insulted in your presence. Yet the Church is more to you than mother and sister. In your Baptism she made you a child of God and an heir of His kingdom ; and ever since then, and on to your last moment of earthly existence, she is with you, like a visible guardian angel, sustaining you on your journey, raising you up when you fall, pursuing you and bringing you back when you stray from the narrow path leading to eternal life.

Think of the sublime and practically unlimited power given to her for this very purpose of your

sanctification and salvation. Every hour, day and night, hundreds of Masses are offered up in one or other part of the world ; and in each of them you are prayed for. And what a prayer is that of the Mass ! The prayer of the Wounds and Blood and Death of Jesus Christ ! Moreover, there is no sin that man can commit which the Church has not ample delegation from Jesus Christ to forgive. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," He said when about to ascend into heaven. "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them : and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

Every important event of human life—every vital turning-point, has a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ for its sanctification. Baptism and Confirmation in infancy and childhood, Matrimony at the period of full age, Extreme Unction at the hour of death, Penance and the Holy Eucharist at all times—these are helps, some of them morally and some absolutely necessary for our eternal happiness ; and the Church is given entire control over them. It is, then, quite true to say that the supernatural destiny of mankind depends on the action of the Church. In other words, she holds "the keys

of the kingdom of heaven" in her custody. But she is more than a mere gate-keeper. She is commissioned to go out into the highways and byways of the world and invite, exhort, entreat all she meets to gather round her and listen to the message with which she is charged for them, that she may admit them to their eternal rest.

This power with which every Catholic knows the Church to be invested ought to be sufficient to secure for her the heart-felt loyalty and submission of her children. But we are proud of our Church, and are attached to her; aye, and we would die for her, if necessary, for other reasons beside her divine mission or power. Look at the grand, unselfish, humanizing work she is doing in the world. See her priests going through the slums of our towns and cities, seeking among the dregs and sweepings of society for souls to convert and save. See her missionaries crossing the confines of civilized life, and going into the wilderness, the mountain fastness, the unexplored forest, in quest of the savage tribe or the still more savage outlaw, to bring them to God. See her religious Sisterhoods, renouncing all the comforts and refinements of their homes

and devoting their lives to the service of the poor and sick and outcast.

Take the Sacrament of Penance alone, and see the amount of happiness the Church confers through it, the amount of crime and sin she prevents by it, all over the world. Go into any Catholic church on a Saturday night and see what crowds are waiting around the confessionals. There is scarcely one in those crowds who does not represent a home made happier by the absolution he is going to receive, an example of honesty, fidelity, and purity given to his fellow-workmen, a humanizing, elevating principle contributed to the society in which he moves. Now try to form an estimate of the number of those confessionals scattered over the earth, and you will see the extent of the mission of mercy which the Church is fulfilling by this one sacrament alone.

The Church seeks nothing for herself ; and this is another reason that attaches her children to her. If she asks for material help, it is to build temples for divine worship, schools for the education of the poor, hospitals and homes for the sick and aged. The vast bulk of the private fortunes of her ministers—the accumulations of

years of simple, economic living—goes to the same purposes. There is no ostentation about those bequests; the world hears nothing of them, except when disappointed relatives try to deprive the Church and the poor of their just rights. The laws of many countries interfere with those rights; and in some places it is illegal to will real estate to ecclesiastical bodies for religious or charitable purposes. But the civil power does not take a broad, enlightened view of the true welfare of society when it hampers the Church in her apostolic work. No secular organization can teach the poor, or care for the sick, or relieve human want in any of its phases, with the economy or efficiency with which all these things are done among us by mere voluntary effort. Besides, it is childish to dread ecclesiastical influence as European powers dread it. No people can have a higher guarantee of security and permanence than those among whom the authority of the Church is recognized and given free scope for its exercise.

Some Catholics are weak enough to think that they rise in the estimation of their Protestant friends by professing indifference to the teaching of their Church. They aspire to be thought lib-

eral, and they foolishly imagine that they cannot be liberal and Catholic at the same time. Hence they are guilty of disloyalty to the Church, and they endanger their salvation from unworthy motives that earn only contempt and ridicule, where they had expected commendation and applause. Protestants have too much common-sense to allow themselves to be deceived in their estimate of disloyal Catholics. "You milk-and-water Catholics," they say, "either believe in your Church or you do not. If you believe in her, you should submit to her teaching and not be ashamed to profess your submission to it. If you do not believe in her, then it is unmanly and ignoble to hang on to her and call yourselves Catholics, when she throws you off and disowns you."

Since I wrote this last paragraph a few hours ago, I have read an extract from a private letter written by Boyle O'Reilly the day before his death. The words are so outspoken and enthusiastic an expression of a Catholic's love for his Church, and his pride in belonging to her, that I make no apology for inserting them here.

"Your letter," he writes, "makes me smile. Puritan you, with your condemnation of the

great, art-loving, human, music-breathing, color-raising, spiritual, mystical, symbolical Catholic Church! A great, generous, loving heart will never find peace and comfort and field of labor except within her unstatistical, sunlike, benevolent motherhood. I, I am a Catholic, just as I am a dweller on the planet, a lover of yellow sunlight, and flowers in the grass, and sound of birds. Man never knew anything so like God's work as the magnificent, sacrificial, devotional faith of the hoary but young Catholic Church. There is no other Church—they are all just way-stations. Your M's and S's and U's and B's are playing at belief and polishing the outward brass-work of faith. Child, child, there are scales on your eyes and a crust on your sympathetic springs—the scales and crusts of inheritance."

What a contrast these fervid words present with the cringing, traitorous language frequently used by Catholics, in speaking of revealed dogmas of religion, or of the uncompromising attitude of Rome to anarchy and infidelity! No one has ever lost a friend worth having, for strong convictions and fixed principles. On the contrary, in estimating a man's character, the trait above all others which commands our respect and hom-

age is fearless, outspoken consistency—making the largest allowance for the opinions of others, but holding resolutely to one's own. The Catholic Church would undoubtedly be more respected by outsiders, and perhaps win more followers, were her children to be more loyal to her and more ready to defend her honor than many of them appear to be. True, grace is required to confess belief in the Church before unbelievers and scoffers. But the grace was given us in its fulness in Confirmation, and it needs only to be revived and invoked, to come to our aid and strengthen us in the most difficult circumstances of life.

Another obstacle to thorough-going loyalty to the Church is scandal. Many Catholics believe all ministers of religion to be angels in the flesh, and therefore incapable of human infirmities or vices. Hence when anything occurs to shake this belief, those weak-kneed brethren are tempted to attribute to the entire ecclesiastical body the crime or back-sliding of one or other of its members. Now, the Church is not a society of angels, but of men; and it is ruled not by saints confirmed in grace and free from passions, but by frail, struggling mortals who carry with them

into the sanctuary the same downward tendencies to forbidden, earthly things they had experienced on the other side of it. No doubt, they have the powerful helps conferred by the Sacrament of Orders, to keep them in the state of holiness befitting their position. But those helps do not interfere with their free-will ; they may be disregarded or forfeited ; and the priest may become at any time like a dismasted, helmless ship at sea—both destined to almost certain destruction with the many souls entrusted to their charge.

But those break-downs are not nearly so numerous as some ill-disposed persons would have us believe. As a proof, let any Catholic compare the number of zealous, holy priests he knows with the number of those who, he can positively assert, have broken through their sacred vows and fallen away from the Church. He will certainly find the former to be in a vast majority over the latter—vaster, indeed, than in apostolic times, when one out of the Twelve became an apostate, and a second, through human weakness, denied his divine Master.

Some Catholics are disappointed, if not scan-

dalized, at not finding a certain ideal sanctity in their priest. For instance, if he collect his pews with business-like punctuality, or if he be not liberal to extravagance in lending or giving away his money, he is thought decidedly unapostolic and unsaintlike. Now, those good but discontented Catholics have yet to learn this simple truth, that the work-a-day sanctity of the Church is not cast in an heroic mould. It has a natural, human element in it. It is like a light burning within an earthen vase: you know the light is there, but it is dim and fitful, and it takes many years to transform the clay surrounding it into its own glowing, spiritual nature. Indeed, it may be safely held that, in most cases, the light of every-day holiness will be fitted to shine before the throne of God for eternity, only through the cleansing fire of purgatory.

Let us, then, give credit to others for the good we know them to possess, and never presume to judge them because that good is seen side by side with much earthly dross. The Holy Spirit is ever at work in each individual soul, and we can never know from external appearances the extent or success of His operations,

To develop a spirit of loyalty to the Church, and to maintain it in all its vigor, no human help is more powerful than to confine our reading as much as possible to Catholic books and periodicals. By this means we put ourselves in sympathy with the universal Church ; we realize her magnificent organization ; we understand her sublime, self-sacrificing, Christ-like mission ; and we feel honored in taking even an humble, unappreciated part in her work. We have reason to be proud of our Catholic periodical literature in this country, as it surpasses that of any other country in the world. We have no excuse, then, for not supporting our newspapers, magazines, and reviews ; and when we shall have once acquired a taste for reading them to the exclusion of all others, we shall find not only our faith strengthened by their influence, but new fields of thought and new intellectual pleasures will be opened to us to which no other literature has the key.

And this Catholic reading will have a practical result also. It will deepen our sympathy with every struggling work of Catholic charity in our immediate neighborhood. It will make us more helpful, more generous, more public-spirited. It

will make us more tolerant of the weaknesses and shortcomings of those selected by the Spirit of God to do His work, to confound the strong and self-sufficient.

CHAPTER XXII.

FINAL SUGGESTIONS.



HAVE now come to the concluding chapter of this little work. It would not demand much additional trouble to stretch out its pages to their present length twice told ; but I think it better for many reasons to confine myself to what I have already written, and to the few other suggestions I am now about to make.

The first and most important of these suggestions is, charity—broad, generous, practical charity. Begin with your thoughts of others. Put no man down as wholly bad and outside the pale of sympathy and help. Without minimizing the evil of sin or crime, I do not believe there is so vast a difference between your virtuous citizen and your graceless outlaw as to justify you in looking on the former as a paragon of virtue and the latter as the quintessence of all depravity. Examine the soul of each, and you will find the

difference to be much less than you think. No man is wholly bad; nor is any one beyond all hope of reform as long as God leaves him the gift of life. Think, then, as charitably as you can of all men, especially of those from whom the world turns away in disgust and horror. Inveigh with all the vehemence you will against sin, but spare the sinner. Look only to the image of his Creator which he bears within him, and to the infinite price paid for him on Calvary. Remember the Holy Spirit is in constant relation with his soul, trying to shield it from the consequences of its own wilful rebellion. What God loves, and spares, and yearns to save, do not you despise and hate.

So, too, in your words about others let envy, or malice, or low-bred scandal-mongering have no part. Regard a man or woman against whom a slander has been spoken as a brother or sister felled to the earth by a cruel, cowardly blow. Surely a man of generous nature flies instinctively to protect such a one from further injury, and at least he does not join the rabble that hounds him or her to death.

As to charitable deeds, I scarcely need add anything to what I have said in the chapter on

Kindliness. Help every good work on foot for the relief of suffering, for the spread of Catholic education, for the maintenance of missionary work among those who know not God. Do not wait to see the work in full swing before you give it a helping hand. That man's assistance is of little account who stands by with folded arms while his neighbor's cartwheel is struggling through a deep rut, and offers his services only when the vehicle is on level ground. It is easy to keep Catholic charities in efficient working order when they are once started. Help them at the outset without waiting to see how they work. They certainly could never work if every one so waited.

Some well-meaning people think that money can discharge every obligation imposed on them by charity. This is not so. Charitable undertakings require not only money, but organization, prudent management, sympathy, zealous advocacy—in fact, moral interest and support quite as much as material help. The Catholic layman, then, who begs to be excused from serving on charitable committees, is, generally speaking, deficient in public spirit, and inflicts serious damage on praiseworthy efforts on behalf of the

poor and helpless. His money contribution is only a part of what he can and should give ; and he is all the less excused for not giving his moral help because it would entail little or no inconvenience on him to give it.

I am aware that human motives very often prevent estimable and useful members of congregations from joining charitable associations or committees. But those persons, I believe, do not weigh sufficiently the consequences of their abstention. If every one acted like them, the priest would be left single-handed to transact the business and keep the accounts of institutions and societies got up primarily for the benefit of his congregation. His time would thus be very much occupied in work outside his proper sphere, and the interests of religion would suffer in consequence. Besides, a priest who has the exclusive management of charitable funds almost invariably draws on himself unjust criticism for his mode of administration, however perfect and business-like it be. To save him from these and other inconveniences, his parishioners, particularly the most influential among them, should be hindered by no petty feelings from giving cheerfully and heartily whatever help may be asked

of them. The willingness with which a man overlooks personal considerations in the interests of the poor and of religion is a good test and measure of the genuineness of his Christianity.

I have now only one other suggestion to make, and I make it in the last place, because I wish it to take deep hold of your mind, and to be a safeguard to all the other recommendations that precede it. The suggestion is this: *Attend to personal holiness.* Above all success in life, all social happiness, all wealth and honor and fame, is the paramount work of preparing ourselves and keeping ourselves in readiness for *the summons home* which our Father sends to each one at some unfixed date in his life. How happy we shall feel, when that summons arrives, if we can reproach ourselves with no grave neglect, at least for many previous years, in attending to the "one thing necessary" to secure our everlasting happiness!

The thought of death is sad and repulsive to most of us; but a brave man does not shrink from facing an unpleasant issue when it is inevitable; and a prudent man takes sure and energetic measures to save himself from possible ruin or discomfiture. This is precisely what we

ought to do in the business of our salvation. We ought to look death *square* in the face, so that the sight of it may not scare us when it beckons us to follow it into eternity; and we ought to place and keep ourselves in such a state that in no circumstance of suddenness or accident we may be taken unawares.

As I do not wish to trench on the province of spiritual books, I will give here only a few general hints on the means of personal sanctification, which I think you ought to adopt to secure for yourself a happy eternity. First of all, make it a rule of your life to go to confession once every month. You are not bound to go more than once a year; but a Catholic seriously intent on his salvation will not limit his religious observances to what is strictly obligatory. Besides, confession is of such incalculable benefit to our spiritual and moral well-being that it should need no precept to urge us to a work so salutary and yet so simple and easy. Independently altogether of its primary effects, it soothes the troubled conscience; gives courage to continue the warfare against sin; and, with Communion, impresses a Christian stamp on a man's life. I should advise you very earnestly to allow no consideration

to prevent you from holding fast to this rule. This is not the place for giving the many reasons that would convince you of its utility; but I can confidently assure you that if you try the practice of monthly confession for a year, you will not easily leave it off. Of course, what I say of this sacrament applies also to the Blessed Eucharist.

The next recommendation I have to make is punctuality in prayer. There is a strange inconsistency between our professions and our conduct in regard to this duty. We believe that everything we have comes to us from God as a pure gift; and that there is nothing we can ask for in any way conducive to our spiritual welfare which we shall not obtain. Yet how slow we are to give thanks and express our gratitude for what we have received in the past, and to ask confidently for what we need in the future. No man of any nobility of nature would suffer the stigma of ingratitude to rest on his character; yet most of us unfortunately are indifferent to an infinitely baser ingratitude than any which we could commit against men, in the thanklessness and indifference we display towards God. Now, it is through prayer, and especially through the most holy sacrifice of the Mass, the most sublime and

acceptable of all prayers, that we can make a due return to Heaven for its favors, and obtain all those that we need in the future. Nothing, therefore, can be more reasonable or fitting than to make our lives prayerful; that is, to keep ourselves in a humble, reverent habit of thankfulness to God for the past, and of confident, suppliant entreaty for the future. Such a habit will have more influence in forming our characters and investing them with grace and spiritual beauty than all the instructions we can derive from books or other human sources. I will not dwell at any length on this subject of prayer; but I must clear up one objection very often made by thoroughly honest-minded men. They say: "I cannot pray on account of distractions; and therefore I do not see the good of going on my knees and mumbling over a set form of words."

Now, I tell such a one that he can pray in spite of distractions, and that there is great good in keeping up the habit of prayer, although he never attend to a word he utters. I will show him how this can be. First of all, he goes to prayer with the intention of doing something pleasing to God. That is an act of divine love,

and a better one than if he repeated the formal words in which it is usually expressed. In the next place, he kneels down to speak to God, knowing His infinite dominion over all created things and the reverent demeanor he should hold in His presence. What is that but an act of faith, implicit indeed, but as real and intelligible as if it were spoken in words? Then again, during the whole time he remains uttering those distracted words there is an under-current of very earnest, although half-unconscious prayer surging against the throne of divine Mercy, to which the ear of God is very attentive. The prayer takes some such form as this: "Lord, You know that I cannot pray; but I keep myself here to please You. You know all I want better than I know it myself. You are so kind and indulgent, that I am sure You will overlook my shortcomings. I have no one to go to but You. Have mercy on me." Now, there is both humility and hope in these unspoken words; and we have it on divine authority that the prayer of the humble God never despises.

Hence you should never give up prayer or lose confidence in its sustaining, helpful power, be-

cause you are distracted during it, or feel no attraction towards it. You cannot expect green wood to kindle at once into a bright, smokeless flame. So, too, you must not be discouraged if nature does not yield at once to grace and suffer itself to be set aglow with divine charity. Much that is human and earthly has first to be consumed ; and the furnace is prayer.

The last recommendation I have to make under the head of personal holiness is a negative one. It is this: Never despise any devotional practices which the Church tolerates or approves. On the contrary, have a deep respect for them ; and if you do not join in them, at least do not interfere with those engaged in them. We are not bound to say the Rosary or to wear scapulars, medals, or Agnus Deis. Neither are we bound to go on pilgrimages to Paray-le-Monial, La Salette, or Lourdes ; but we certainly should not sneer at those who do these things. There is a certain boasted large-mindedness which often turns out on analysis to be very narrow and despicable. No one knows by what simple, childlike means the Holy Spirit may guide souls to heaven. Therefore it is at least unwise to despise any of

those means because they are not adapted to ourselves or agreeable to our tastes. Faith is seriously undermined by such contempt. Pride and self-sufficiency are fostered by it; it denotes an un-Catholic frame of mind, and should therefore be carefully suppressed.

I have now, dear reader, finished the task I undertook, of showing you "how to get on" successfully in life, and at the same time secure your eternal welfare. I have nothing further to add except to recommend you not to read over these pages cursorily, but, in going slowly through them, to form practical resolutions of shaping your character by the suggestions you find in them most suitable to your individual circumstances. To do this, however, you should not rely wholly on your own strength of purpose; but you should pray earnestly for spiritual help, and have unbounded confidence that you will obtain it. Divine grace, co-operating with personal effort, is practically invincible.

I hope many lives may be elevated and ennobled by this little work; I hope many homes may be made brighter and happier by its pe-

rusal ; and I hope, above all, that it may be the means of bringing many souls to heaven. If any of these ends be accomplished, the glory will be due to God alone.

THE END.

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Feeney, B.

How to get on

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